

M. P. Anderson

J. N. Kellogg

Hindsight

**Seventh-day Adventist History
in Essays and Extracts**

Ellen G. White

Hugo S. Jones

Dave Fiedler

Geo. S. Butler

Hindsight

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in Essays and Extracts**

Written and compiled by Dave Fiedler

To Clarissa,
and to all who enjoy both stories and wisdom.

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THE Lord directed Moses to recount to the children of Israel His dealings with them in their deliverance from Egypt and their wonderful preservation in the wilderness. He was to call to mind their unbelief and murmuring when brought into trial, and the Lord's great mercy and loving-kindness, which had never forsaken them. This would stimulate their faith and strengthen their courage. While they would be led to realize their own sin and weakness, they would realize also that God was their righteousness and strength.

It is just as essential that the people of God in this day should bear in mind how and when they have been tested, and where their faith has failed; where they have imperiled His cause by their unbelief and also by their self-confidence. God's mercy, His sustaining providence, His never-to-be-forgotten deliverances, are to be recounted, step by step. As God's people thus review the past, they should see that the Lord is ever repeating His dealings.

—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, 210*

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Preface

DESPITE its subtitle, this is not a "History book." To call it such would be a serious overstatement. There are simply too many gaps in its coverage, too many issues and events and personalities entirely absent from its pages for it to qualify as a history text of Seventh-day Adventism. Instead, it is a resource book, an attempt to glean from our past scattered pieces of wisdom, inspiration, encouragement, challenge, and—occasionally—even entertainment. Others would select differently than I have; I encourage them to do so. And when they have chosen that in which they see greatest value, have researched and written and compiled and documented, I trust I shall gain as great satisfaction from their efforts as I hope they will from mine.

It should be understood that there are two differing categories of material in this volume. As noted in the subtitle, these are "Essays" and "Extracts." The former are mainly my words; the latter have been selected from a variety of original source materials, usually stemming from the time period under consideration. In an effort to minimize any confusion of these two categories, they have been typeset each in their own format. Essays appear in single columns, extracts in double.

In its overall features the book is arranged primarily with reference to chronology. Still, the reader will find that the attraction of related subject matter has drawn certain of the extracts decades away from their roots. Some care should be exercised that this not be lost sight of.

I have sought to provide easily accessible references so readers may find more context should they have an interest to do so. This has not always been possible, of course, because much of the material in this volume was selected precisely because it is not commonly available. It was the wish to make these materials "easily accessible" to the Adventist reading public which inspired this book in the first place.

—*Dave Fiedler*

CHAPTER ONE

Fearless!

ONE of the most familiar of Ellen White's many encouragements to God's people is found on page 196 of the book *Life Sketches*. Many, if not the majority, of Seventh-day Adventists could recite from memory—"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."

"Nothing to fear." What a relief that would be to many troubled minds! And yet, broad as the assurance is, it comes tied to a condition—we must not forget. Which raises a disturbing question: What if we have never known the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history?

Surely this statement applies, in one sense, to each person's own experience, the way the Lord has led and taught us individually. Yet the statement's context, and the words "*our* past history," clearly show that Ellen White spoke as well of the denomination as a whole.

At the time she wrote these words Ellen White could speak of having personally "traveled over every step of advance to our present standing." We cannot say that today; we are far too young. Thus it seems that, for the promise of *Life Sketches*, 196, to be fulfilled to us, we must take it upon ourselves to first learn that which we must never forget.

There are, of course, those episodes of our church's past that have become the legends of Adventism. These are well-known, often referred to. For this we may be glad. But all heaven is saddened at every recurrence of the mistakes of the past. Simply put, we *should* know better. We *would* know better, many times, had we the benefit of an acquaintance with "the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."

"Our past history" covers a span of more than a century and a half, not counting the Old and New Testaments and the many lessons to be learned from God's true church through the ages of persecution and the years of the Reformation. From such a storehouse of information one could easily draw lesson upon lesson of tremendous value for God's people today. And while Ellen White certainly employed illustrations from each of these time periods, there is one on which she places unique emphasis: the Advent Awakening and the Midnight Cry of 1844. To sum up as concisely as possible the prominent characteristics of those years, one could do little better than the two words, "earnestness" and "enthusiasm." Surely these are not aspects of our past that we can afford to forget!

Passing over, for now, the deeper and sometimes more technical subjects of the 2300 day/year prophecy, the sanctuary, and the investigative judgment (all of which deserve serious study in their own right), let us briefly consider the experiences of those times, and what we might learn from them.

Camp Meetings

In May, 1842, the sixth general conference of believers in the soon advent of Christ met in Boston. Among the various items of business transacted was the formation of a committee to plan three summer camp meetings for promoting interest in the advent. In late June the first of these convocations was held at East Kingston, New Hampshire. This effort was well received, and plans were expanded somewhat. Instead of the three camp meetings that had been contemplated, they had thirty-one. In 1843 it was forty, in 1844 the number rose to fifty-four. (Bear in mind that *camp* meeting in the 1840s meant horse drawn transportation instead of cars, canvas tents instead of recreational vehicles and motorhomes, buckets of water instead of hoses and plumbing; no refrigeration, few prepared foods, and no heat but an open fire. It was a major undertaking just to attend—let alone to organize—such an event.)

East Kingston was so great a success that the brethren determined to find a way to accommodate the needs of other encampments where facilities were either too small or unavailable. Someone suggested a tent. Funds were solicited, and soon Edward Williams of Rochester, New York, was commissioned to construct a tent. But this was not to be just "a tent." Williams was an advent believer himself (a *Millerite*, if you wish), and this was the most important project in the history of the world. No, this would not be just another tent, this would be the "Great Tent," the largest tent in the country. One hundred twenty feet in diameter, it could seat four thousand comfortably, and another two thousand could be crowded into the aisles. Yes, it would be big, but it was needed soon. After all, souls were deciding their eternal destiny every day.

In July, one month later, the Great Tent went up for the first time.²

Toronto Meeting Hall

The earnestness and enthusiasm engendered by the teaching of the advent is well exemplified by the experience attending its preaching in the city of Toronto, Canada. A traveling advent lecturer found himself unable to secure the use of an adequate hall, for all the churches and larger facilities were closed to the teaching of such doctrine. The only available hall was far too small to hold the crowd that came out for the meeting, and the lecturer announced that unless proper arrangements could be made he would be forced to journey on to other fields of labor.

The only solution was to construct a building dedicated to the purpose. The lecturer describes the progress of the project: "In two hours from the time that the proposition was started in a prayer meeting where our friends had met for worship, the whole amount was subscribed. One brother gave the

land, another the nails, another a quantity of lumber, and more than a score of brethren offered to work on the building; besides money enough being subscribed to pay all other expenses. Our house will be a temporary affair, expecting soon, as we do, to exchange it for that which has foundations, whose builder is God. It will be about thirty feet by ninety, and will be finished in six or eight days. The excitement through the city is immense, and it is hourly on the increase."

James White

In the late fall of 1842 James White was one of many who, although untrained for the work of the ministry, felt the conviction to preach the "advent neat" Circumstances were not favorable, however. He later wrote: "I had neither horse, saddle, bridle, nor money, yet felt that I must go. I had used my past winter's earnings in [buying] necessary clothing, in attending second advent meetings, and the purchase of books and the chart. But my father offered me the use of a horse for the winter, and Elder Polley gave me a saddle with both pads torn off, and several pieces of an old bridle. I gladly accepted these, and cheerfully placed the saddle on a beech log and nailed on the pads, fastened the pieces of the bridle together with malleable nails, folded my chart (with a few pamphlets on the subject of the advent) over my breast, snugly buttoned up in my coat, and left my father's house on horseback."⁴

That winter James White kept a taxing itinerary. He once completed a series of lectures as the sun was setting, but still had an appointment to meet that night sixteen miles away. "My clothes were wet with sweat. I needed rest. But there was my next appointment. The people would be together in about an hour, and I had sixteen miles to go. So I hastily said farewell...mounted my horse and galloped away toward Lisbon Plains in a stinging cold February evening. I was chilled, but there was no time to call and warm. My damp clothing nearly froze to me, but I galloped on."⁵

Congregations must have been somewhat more forgiving in those days, for White records that the people were still there when he arrived, only an hour late. His sermon went well, despite the inconvenience of chattering teeth.

Motivating Factors

William Miller, the farmer-turned-preacher whose doctrine so stirred those who heard it, gives an insight into his motivation in a letter to his close friend and fellow worker, J. V Himes: "Those souls whom I have addressed in my six months' tour are continually before me, sleeping or waking; I can see them perishing by the thousands; and when I reflect on the accountability of their teachers, who say 'peace and safety,' I am in pain for them."⁶

This concern for the salvation of others was the motive behind the grueling pace set by those who felt the responsibility of bearing to their fellow men the message that had blessed their own souls. In the opening days of 1844 Miller would write: "I have wronged no man; neither have I sought for your honors or gold. I have preached about 4,500 lectures in about twelve years, to at least

500,000 different people. I have broken my constitution and lost my health; and for what? That if possible I might be the means of saving some."⁷

Similarly, James White expressed the conviction that drove him on in his work: "God forbid that I should fold my arms in lazy-lock while sinners are sinking to eternal night."⁸

Joel Spaulding, a lesser-known lecturer in the advent cause, described his travels as follows: "I have traveled in the forty days, two hundred and seventy-five miles, had my beast fall twice, while on horseback, in sloughs; and once in the midst of Kennebec River while fording, where the current was considerably rapid, and up to the stirrups. As I was cast into the river, the horse fell upon me; but I escaped unhurt, with the exception of a lame ankle, on which I was unable to bear my weight for some days. But none of these things moved me. I could hobble with the assistance of a staff into the desk, happy in having the privilege still of arousing a slumbering church to a sense of the immediate 'appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.'"⁹

Battling for God

Though Miller was not trained as a speaker, he soon learned that timidity and indecision were ineffective in presenting his message. Enlistment in the Lord's army, he found, called for as much personal courage and determination as service in his country's army ever had. Writing to a fellow minister, he described his concept of winning a battle for God: "Depend wholly on the power of the Spirit. Keep your sword the right side up, the edge to the heart, and your arm well nerved. Bring home the blow with an intent to kill. Be not afraid of hurting your hearers, wind no silk handkerchiefs around your blade, nor withhold one moiety of power when you make a thrust. Some are in the habit of hiding a part of the sword, for fear the enemy will dodge the blow; but this will never do. The moment your enemy discovers your cowardice or fear, they despise you. They rouse to action with redoubled vigor and ten to one if you are not overthrown. Never show any discouragement, or unbelief in the strength or power of your Commander. Let His name be your watchword, His armor your shield, and His cause your field. If the enemy roar and make a noise, take courage, double your diligence; it is a certain sign that your blows are telling home."¹⁰

Dealing With Fanaticism

The year 1843, as measured by the Jewish calendar, was originally anticipated to be the last of this world's existence. It was a time of intense interest to believers in the advent, and many an unbeliever, as well, watched the unfolding of events with more than casual attention. As always under such circumstances, the danger of fanaticism was a serious concern. Time and time again through the history of the church, the devil has brought dispute upon the people of God by insinuating his own hellish concepts and practices in among the advances being made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Miller, and others, had foresight enough to perceive this danger and,

to a great degree, cut it off before its foul influence became prominent. But even the timely warnings of such men was not entirely sufficient to repel all traces of fanaticism.

John Starkweather, the assistant pastor of the Chardon Street Chapel in Boston, began to teach that "conversion, however full and thorough, did not fit one for God's favor without a second work; and that this second work was *usually indicated by some bodily sensation.*" As this teaching developed, these "bodily sensations" often took the form of fainting and fitful seizures. Starkweather called these the "sealing power" of God.

Sylvester Bliss, Miller's contemporary and biographer, describes the situation: "These manifestations were new to a majority of his hearers. Some looked on in wonder and awe, while others were suspicious of the new development, but feared to 'offend against the Holy Ghost,' as dissent from it was termed; and those who were favorably impressed were anxious to experience on themselves the 'sealing power.'

"Those who were familiar with the history of fanaticism in past ages, who had read with pain the termination of the career of the eloquent Edward Irving in England, who knew the devastation caused by fanaticism in the time of the Reformation, of its effects in the early ages of Christianity, and of the results produced by it even in many portions of our own country during the infancy of some of the sects among us, were at no loss respecting its character."

Near the close of April, 1843, J. V. Himes, the head pastor of the Chardon Street Chapel and Miller's closest associate, was back in Boston after an extended absence. He "determined to endeavor to stem the current of fanaticism which had commenced [in his absence]. In a calm and faithful manner, he gave them [the church members] the history of various movements which had been destroyed or greatly injured by fanaticism; and, without intimating that evidences of such then existed, he exhorted them to learn from past experience, and see to it that they avoid the rocks on which others had been shipwrecked.

"Mr. Starkweather arose in reply, and was so vehement that Mr. Himes felt justified in again addressing the audience, exposing the nature of the exercises that had appeared among them, and their pernicious tendency.

"This so shocked the sensibilities of those who regarded them as the 'great power of God' that they cried out and stopped their ears. Some jumped upon their feet, and some ran out of the house. 'You will drive out the Holy Ghost!' cried one. 'You are throwing on cold water!' said another.

" 'Throwing on cold water!' said Mr. Himes; 'I would throw on the Atlantic Ocean before I would be identified with such abominations as these, or suffer them in this place unrebuked.' "12

The Seventh Month Movement

The seventh month movement, which focused the attention of the believers on October 22 as the expected day of Christ's return, did not begin

until the middle of August, 1844. Drawing on parallels in the parable of the ten virgins, the more definite message of Christ's soon return came to be called the Midnight Cry. "Behold! the Bridegroom cometh," was sounded far and wide.

It is interesting to note the direct contrast between this movement and the fanaticism which sought to attach itself to the work of God. William Miller, James White, and Ellen White, each writing from their perspective of personal experience in the message, all stress this distinction. In October, 1844, only a few days before the passing of the time, Miller wrote:

"I think I have never seen among our brethren such *faith as* is manifested in the seventh month. 'He will come,' is the common expression. 'He will not tarry the second time,' is their general reply. There is a forsaking of the world, an unconcern for the wants of life, a general searching of heart, confession of sin, and a deep feeling in prayer for Christ to come. A preparation of heart to meet Him seems to be the labor of their agonizing spirits. There is something in this present waking up different from anything I have ever before seen. There is no great expression of joy: that is, as it were, suppressed for a future occasion, when all heaven and earth will rejoice together with joy unspeakable and full of glory. There is no shouting; that, too, is reserved for the shout from heaven. The singers are silent: they are waiting to join the angelic hosts, the choir from heaven. No arguments are used or needed: all seem convinced that they have the truth. There is no clashing of sentiments: all are of one heart and of one mind. Our meetings are all occupied with prayer, and exhortation to love and obedience. The general expression is, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him.'"¹³

James White asserts that the seventh month movement "was subversive of all those forms of fanaticism which had made their appearance somewhat in connection with the second advent cause. And it is a fact that Satan had crowded upon some who bore the advent name almost every stripe of fanaticism he had ever invented. But these were at once swallowed up by the solemn power of the Midnight Cry, as the rods of the magicians were by the rod of Aaron."¹⁴

And Ellen White says simply that "Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, none have been more free from human imperfection and the wiles of Satan than was that of the autumn of 1844."¹⁵

The Passing of the Time

The greatest overriding similarity between the believers in 1844 and those who will be alive at the coming of the Lord is the simple fact that both will have an experience of waiting with intense longing for the second advent. Though Christ will at last return, and all disappointed hopes will vanish, nevermore to be seen again—still, as long as we remain this side of that fulfillment, we will have lessons to learn from the disappointment at the passing of the time in 1844.

It seems unlikely that any will survive the test of waiting for the coming of Christ who could not also have survived the test of further delay. And it was just such a test which proved so disastrous to the faith of thousands who waited confidently on that twenty-second day of October. How might we have fared had we been in their place?

Miller wrote of the day of expectation as "a solemn time" when "even the wicked scoffers stood mute." But then—"It passed. And the next day it seemed as though all the demons from the bottomless pit were let loose upon us. The same ones and many more who were crying for mercy two days before, were now mixed with the rabble and mocking, scoffing, and threatening in a most blasphemous manner."¹⁶

There were thousands of Millerite Adventists who waited for their Lord to return, but knew not what to do—or lacked the willingness to do what they knew they should—when He did not appear. It was a time of confusion and sorrow such as they had never experienced before.

Is it not wise to ponder how such events might have affected us? Would we have responded as did Miller? "Brethren, hold fast; let no man take your crown. I have fixed my mind upon another time, and here I mean to stand until God gives me more light. And that is *Today*, *TODAY*, and *TODAY*, until He comes, and I see HIM for whom my soul yearns."¹⁷

That the test imposed upon the final remnant of God's church should be lighter than that endured by others seems unlikely at best. But remember, "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."

1. *Life Sketches*, 1%.

2. See R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, (1979), 40-42.

3. *The Midnight Cry*, February 22, 1844 (F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, (1944), 166).

4. James White, *Life Incidents*, Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, (1868), 73.

5. *Ibid.*, 92.

6. Letter, March 31, 1840 (Nichol, 78).

7. *Signs of the Times*, January 31, 1844 (Nichol, 160).

8. Letter, March 4, 1843 (Nichol, 199).

9. Letter, November 24, 1842 (Nichol, 199).

10. Letter, May 19, 1841 (Nichol, 84).

11. Sylvester Bliss, *Memoirs of William Miller*, Boston, (1853), 232, emphasis supplied.

12. *Ibid.*, 232-233.

13. Letter, October 11, 1844 (Bliss, 270-271).

14. *Life Sketches of Elder James White and His Wife, Ellen G. White*, Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, (1888), 95.

15. *The Great Controversy*, 401.

16. Letter, December 13, 1844 (Nichol, 250).

17. Letter, November 10, 1844 (Nichol, 267).

CHAPTER Two

The New York Reporter and the Great Tent

In The Midnight Cry, F D. Nichol's classic history of the Advent Awakening, a contemporary account of a "Millerite" camp meeting gives a glimpse of both the believers' activities and the public's perception of them.

THE last time the great tent was pitched in the 1842 season was at Newark, New Jersey, November 3. It is possible to present a very detailed picture of this meeting because the New York Herald, James Gordon Bennett's paper, sent a reporter to cover in detail the happenings of each day. After making due allowance for some flippant and occasionally sacrilegious comment, the news story bears on the whole the clear proofs of serious reporting. At least it gives us the firsthand impressions of a man who was reporting what he had seen and heard, in contrast to the usual practice of the newspapers of reporting merely hearsay and rumor regarding Millerism....

The reporter's story for Saturday, the fifth, opens thus: "The excitement is gradually but surely increasing in this place in relation to the second advent....

"Those who think that one of these Millerite meetings resembles a Methodist camp meeting are greatly mistaken; there is much more order, decorum, and [intellectual] argu-

ment in these Miller meetings. Up to the present time there has not been a disorderly person upon the ground; all has been quiet and decorous."

The order of the services for the day was first "the ordinary prayer meeting in the morning," the regular preaching service at which Josiah Litch spoke, then the noonday meal, then certain special prayer groups at one o'clock, followed later in the afternoon by "Father Miller's sermon."

Sunday, as naturally would be expected, was a very important day. The reporter estimates that "at one time there were over six thousand people on the campground today.... There was no riot, no confusion, no disturbance on the campground."

In his report for Monday, the seventh, he wrote: "The excitement in regard to this camp meeting increases with every succeeding day.... At any rate, the excitement is so great, that at all the churches here yesterday, the respective ministers **preached against it**. Some...denounced Mr. Miller as a great humbug."

At this point the reporter made his personal observation on Miller: "He appears to be very sincere, although he is a Yankee."

The reporter made a few critical comments on the way some of the people prayed in their little groups in the prayer tent between the general meetings, but he added immediately: "Now, I have not a word to say against all this; I repeat, there is no doubt of the piety and sincerity of these people, and that they have as keen a sense of propriety as anybody else, and as much or more morality, but this is a queer way of showing it."

Though it was a Monday, "there were six thousand people here today," said the reporter.

He told of a prominent minister who was coming to Newark within the next day or two to speak against Millerism. That seemed to be a more or less common practice where Millerite services were held. It always added to the interest in the meetings.

On Tuesday, the eighth, on account of "a terrible storm of wind and rain" no service was held in the tent, and "Mr. Miller preached a sermon in the afternoon in one of the regular churches here." Then follows a summary of the sermon, with a concluding note: "This sermon was attended by many ladies of the first standing, and preachers of all denominations, and made a great impression."

On Wednesday the great tent was raised once more, but the place was still too damp for meeting, and "Mr. Miller preached again in the church in town." The reporter added: "As he has already converted

three ministers in this place, and secured a footing in one of the churches, I think it highly advisable that the learned theologians of New York should be made fully acquainted with his movements and his statements, in order that they may prepare themselves as the ministers of this place and Doctor Brownlee are doing, to controvert him.... I sincerely hope that next Sunday they will all preach upon it. Bear in mind, that I am no believer in or convert to his doctrines, but he has produced a tremendous impression among the people of this city and the country round about."

In his report for Thursday, the tenth, the newsman told of the sermon preached against Millerism by Doctor Brownlee the preceding evening and of the great crowds who sought admittance to his meeting.

The write-up for the eleventh consists almost wholly of a summary of the sermon preached by Miller.

On Saturday a heavy rain prevented the holding of meetings in the tent. 'A large iron foundry,' with a capacity of 5,000, was hired. By this time the reporter was rather used up by the strenuous program of attending all the services, for he remarked: "I have to attend their meetings, morning, noon, and night until I feel completely fagged out. Some days I have scarcely had time to get my meals, and write out the report between the acts. I thought the Methodists were pretty indefatigable at camp meetings, but these people can beat 'em hollow."

CHAPTER THREE

When the Books Were Opened

CLEAR skies greeted them that morning as they awoke to watch the last dawn of earthly history. Quiet calm mingled with jubilant expectation as the sun rose first over morning mists, then high overhead, and at last slid serenely down to the western horizon. Darkness fell, but not their hopes. Faith that could endure the test of taunting ex-friends was not to be turned aside easily.

Emotions straining within, they listened at last to the long, slow, melancholy tolling of the midnight chimes. And then they knew. The day was past. And He had not come.

The story of October 22, 1844, is familiar to Seventh-day Adventists. And well it should be. Together with the Millerite movement, it forms the groundwork upon which the Lord saw fit to erect His church of the end time. More than that, it was cryptically portrayed over seventeen centuries in advance by the apostle John when he penned what we know today as the tenth chapter of Revelation.

There is a danger, though, that we will overlook the significance of the events that followed. We do ourselves a disservice when we imagine that such a crushing blow of confusion and humiliation could be easily resolved. It was no small matter to find the reasons for their disappointment, to comprehend the new truths brought to light, and to discover how this broader understanding of the plan of salvation meshed with already recognized truth.

Such accomplishments carry high price tags, not in dollars, but in time, effort, pain, confusion, and humility. These are the price of advance, the currency of growth. As the days of God's shaking and sifting bear down harder and closer upon His end-time people, it would be well for us to learn from the past, to gain proficiency in the purchase of truth.

Soon after the disappointment the Lord began to break through the gloom that had settled upon His people. Within hours of that dismal midnight, Hiram Edson was to have his mind opened to a clearer understanding of Daniel 8:14. In his words, he then realised that "instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month, at the end of the 2300 days, that He for the first time entered on that day, the Second Apartment of that sanctuary; and that He had a work to perform in the Most Holy before coming to this earth."¹

This seed thought, small as a grain of mustard, was destined to grow to dimensions unimagined by Hiram Edson that fall morning. In fact, though

the revelation was right on time for the Advent group at Port Gibson, New York, it was much too large a jump for most of the disheartened believers to make just then. Full explanations would have to wait. The people needed simple answers to basic questions on the validity of the Millerite movement as a whole, and the seventh month movement with its October 22 culmination in particular. Who had led them so far from the respected mainstream of society—God? or was it the devil? They had to know.

And so, while the Port Gibson group busied themselves with several months of diligent Bible study on the sanctuary service, a loving heavenly Father again took the initiative to comfort His confused children. In December of 1844, a 17-year-old girl had a simple vision of the Adventist people following—not Satan—but Christ as He led them higher and farther from the "wicked world below." And all the while their path was lighted by the "Midnight Cry" of two months before. It was not a learned exposition of Scripture, only a message of comfort and assurance. Understanding would come soon enough. For now, faith and trust in a Father's care were sufficient.

So the believers clung to their hopes, but it wasn't easy. What might our reaction be should we find ourselves in a similar situation? Do we love truth enough to pursue it despite such obstacles? Do we love our brethren enough to listen to—and perhaps even learn from—their understandings of Scripture?

Initial Development of Sanctuary Theology

Providentially, the small group at Port Gibson (Hiram Edson, Dr. F. B. Hahn, and Owen R. L. Crosier) had time to study in the relative peace of their secluded locality. By April of 1845 they were prepared to present a reasonably well-developed line of Biblical evidence indicating that the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days must of necessity be the great original in heaven. Further, the instructions for the cleansing of the typical sanctuary indicated a two-stage process in doing away with sin. Throughout the course of the year the sins of the people were transferred by the blood of sacrifices into the sanctuary. Only at the end of the sacred year, on the tenth day of the seventh civil month—the day of atonement—were the sins finally blotted out.

Such was the cleansing of the earthly tabernacle. That a similar process should occur in the heavenly original seemed obvious.

The publication of Crosier's article in *The Day-Dawn* that spring of 1845 led to an enlarged presentation through the pages of *The Day-Star*, a much more widely circulated journal, in February of 1846.

It was this article which eventually received divine endorsement through Ellen White. Writing in April, 1847, she would say, "The Lord shew me in vision, more than one year ago, that Brother Crosier had the true light on the cleansing of the sanctuary, etc.; and that it was His will that Brother C. should write out the view which he gave us in the *Day-Star Extra*, February 7, 1846. I feel fully authorized by the Lord to recommend that Extra to every saint."⁷

But the work was not over yet. God had not given all His truth to the trio from New York, nor had He miraculously preserved them from all error.

Though these dedicated students of the Word had been blessed with a profound revelation of truth, they and others had yet an experience to gain. God was guiding. His people could do no better than to follow on as He led, resisting the temptation to run ahead on their own.

It was this very problem, in fact, which proved the greatest snare to those who had once rejoiced in the expectation of their Lord's imminent return. Many of those who had been strong to lead out in the aggressive evangelism of the Millerite movement failed the test of waiting in quietness of soul for the Lord to make plain the next step of the journey. Trying to regain momentum after the 1844 disappointment, they found themselves departing further and further from Miller's original teachings on prophetic interpretation. Unable to provide a workable alternative to October 22, 1844, as the termination of the 2300 days, they eventually denied the very core of Adventism—the connection of the seventy-week and 2300-day prophetic periods of the eighth and ninth chapters of Daniel.

The Albany Conference

In what amounted to a last-ditch effort to restore some form of harmony, unity, and orthodoxy to the shattered movement, they held a conference for all "Second Advent lecturers and brethren who still adhere to the original Advent faith." What they then considered to be the "original" is not clear. This 'Albany Conference,' held in April of 1845 (the same month in which the *Day-Dawn* was to present the findings of Hiram Edson's study group) specifically denied the prophetic significance of October 22.³

With what were probably the best of intentions, the men who had led God's people so far in the track of truth, had failed to wait for His leading. At the very time that the explanation of their disappointment was being presented in an organized manner, they chose to close the door which their Father was opening before them.

But not all. The "little flock," the "scattered remnant," could not, would not, abandon God-given truth. And what a store of truth they found! For when the "temple of God was opened in heaven"⁴ not only the sanctuary, but also the Sabbath, the state of the dead, end-time events, the judgment—in short, the whole plan of salvation—came into sharper focus than ever before.

We should know, for we are the heirs of this theological gold mine. But do we appreciate what they did for us? Not in the sense of venerating the fathers of the church. The early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers would have precious little joy in garnished tombs. They would value far more the sense of appreciation which would lead us to do in our day as they did in theirs.

Study Group Methodology

To love truth, and to love one's brethren—will the two meet in our lives today as they did in theirs so long ago? Will we allow God to teach us how to advance in unison? Never a backward step, but always a care and an effort to see that all move forward together.

The memories, and the admonitions, of Ellen White deserve our consideration:

"Those who sincerely desire truth will not be reluctant to lay open their positions for investigation and criticism, and will not be annoyed if their opinions and ideas are crossed. This was the spirit cherished among us forty years ago.

"We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. Solemnity characterized these councils of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth.

'After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed, and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to Heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are One. Many tears were shed. If one brother rebuked another for his dullness of comprehension in not understanding a passage as he understood it, the one rebuked would afterward take his brother by the hand, and say, 'Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus is with us; let us keep a humble and teachable spirit'; and the brother addressed would say, 'Forgive me, brother, I have done you an injustice.' Then we would bow down in another season of prayer.

"We spent many hours in this way. We did not generally study together more than four hours at a time, yet sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our time. On some occasions the Spirit of God would come upon me, and difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way, and then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one Spirit.

"We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions. We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are One.

"Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart, but when this disposition appeared we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer, and without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from Heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation.

'At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another.

"In those days God wrought for us, and the truth was precious to our souls. It is necessary today that our unity be of a character that will bear the test of trial. We are in the school of the Master here, that we may be trained for the school above. We must learn to bear disappointment in a Christlike manner, and the lesson taught by this will be of great importance to us."⁵

The Work of Cleansing

It was hard work for the pioneers. Progress sometimes came only slowly. One lingering gray area was the direct import of the antitypical day of atonement. In 1851 James White would write, "There is no intimation of a space of time between the end of the [2300] days and the cleansing of the sanctuary. Whatever it may be, the work of cleansing it immediately follows the end of the days."⁶

Not until 1855 did the missing piece of the puzzle—the concept of a pre-Advent judgment—come to print. More than a year would pass before the coining of the now-familiar term "investigative judgment."⁷

Some have endeavored to see a flaw, a weakness, in the time required to arrive at a full understanding of the disappointment. In reality, the time and effort required to arrive at truth is no argument against it, but rather an eloquent testimony to the patience and perseverance of those whose love for God would admit no obstacle. Such an experience is of as great value now as in bygone days. And just as possible for those who choose to pay the price.

We, today, do not understand as we should the truths for which our forefathers paid so dearly. More than our naiveté, we display our slothfulness by acting as though these doctrines require no further study to yield their full blessing. It is dumbfounding that the special people raised up to herald these truths should consider them worthy of nothing more than the partial and fragmentary comprehension we have of them. Who can doubt but that the understanding of the heavenly sanctuary and the judgment will take on more pointed and practical meaning as we near the close of probation? But where will this newly heightened meaning come from? From those walking far from God? From those who are unable and unwilling to press together in seeking Heaven's blessing?

Even a brief look at the experience of Adventism's pioneers is enough to dispel such thoughts. Our understanding of the truth for this end-time will one day be complete. And, too, our fellowship and union with our brethren will at the same time be unbroken. This is, after all, the great antitypical day of at-one-ment.

1. Hiram Edson, MS "Life and Experience" (Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History*, Southern Publishing Association, (1975), 26)

2. A Word to the "Little Flock," 12

3. See P Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, Eerdmans, (1977), 113, 121, 134

4. Revelation 11:19

5. *Review and Herald*, July 26, 1892

6. James White, "Our Present Position," *Ibid.*, January 1851, 27

7. Uriah Smith, "The Cleansing of the Sanctuary," *Ibid.*, October 2, 1855, 52-53; James White, "The Judgment," *Ibid.*, January 29, 1857, 100-101

CHAPTER FOUR

Sabbath Problems

IN modern Adventist parlance we normally use the term "Sabbath problems" to denote the conflicts and difficulties occasionally faced by church members in their employment. But working around a corporate practice of Saturday labor is neither the first nor last of the Sabbath problems God's people are to face. Establishing the Sabbath as a part of God's last truth in the minds of believers was a difficult and time-consuming task. To bring the Sabbath truth to its full meaning and potential will be even harder. Fortunately, the former experience may provide helpful insights into the experience yet future.

The "passing of the time" in October of 1844 marked the beginning of the end for the Millerite movement. As a host of voices proclaimed the virtues of one new theory after another, the foundational truths of the movement seemed to be more and more forgotten. Efforts to reach consensus were often far from successful, for the once commonly accepted principles of Biblical interpretation were first strained, then formally abandoned. As one might expect, the ranks of the "believers" shrank rapidly.

The situation was a difficult one. The old explanations and interpretations which had led to the expectation of Christ's return in the fall of 1844 were obviously flawed. There could be no denying that the Millerites' expectations had been mistaken. Obviously, some new element must be injected into the situation if an adequate understanding of either their past experience or the future of the movement was to be forthcoming. But what was that to be?

Theological positions, like most forms of logical construction, have a troubling tendency to be interconnected. It is seldom as easy to alter any one position as it first may appear, for to do so will usually demand a revision of some aspect of another position, which revises another, and another, and another. As a result, what may initially seem to be only a minor adjustment can easily lead to a complete alteration of a large range of related concepts. Such was the case with the interpretation of the "two thousand and three hundred days" of Daniel 8:14.

As the discussion (and, sometimes, argument) over the need to either redefine the "cleansing of the sanctuary" or to relocate the termination point of the prophecy absorbed the interest of many in the movement, another matter—seemingly unrelated—was also coming to the fore. Rejected and opposed by many as a needless intrusion into an already confused situation,

Sabbatarianism nevertheless found new converts in the latter half of the 1840s. Though not recognized at first, the seventh-day Sabbath was also to find new meaning in the context of the times.¹

The First Sabbatarian Millerites

The Seventh Day Baptists formally sought to attract the attention of the Advent believers to the Sabbath as early as 1843, but the response was minimal. The well-known story of Rachel Oakes (a Seventh Day Baptist) challenging Frederick Wheeler (a Methodist Adventist circuit rider) to "keep *all* the commandments" took place sometime in the winter of 1843-1844. As a result, Wheeler and other members of the Washington, New Hampshire, church became the first Sabbathkeeping Millerite Adventists in North America. (At least one individual, a Scotsman by the name of James Begg, preceded them.²) But Wheeler and his fellows remained comparatively isolated from the expanding understanding of the Sabbath. Not until 1850 would Wheeler write in the *Review and Herald* that "several have lately been led to embrace the truth of the third angel's message in full, and others are more or less interested in the subject."³

In the fall of 1844, the Sabbath question was mentioned briefly in the Millerite publication, *The Midnight Cry*. The editor concluded that, while the seventh day had indeed been specified as a holy day in Old Testament times, "there is no particular portion of time which Christians are required by law to set apart as holy time." In other words, Sunday was no more sacred than any other day. He admonished his readers that, should they not be convinced of his position in this regard, "there is another conclusion to which they must come, namely, *The particular portion of time which God requires us to observe as holy is the seventh day of the week, that is, Saturday.*"⁴

It was Thomas Preble, a Free-Will Baptist Adventist, who first spoke favorably of the Sabbath in any prominent way within the Millerite movement. In the February 28, 1845, issue of the *Hope of Israel* he gave his reasons for the observance of the seventh day. The article was republished as a tract the following month, and it was in this form that Preble's material came to the attention of both Joseph Bates and John Andrews. Bates, in turn, penned a number of publications on the Sabbath, beginning in 1846 with a 48-page tract entitled *The Seventh Day Sabbath, A Perpetual Sign*.

Bates was to play an important role in the introduction of the Sabbath to James White and Ellen Harmon. On a number of occasions during the first half of 1846 the two young people met Elder Bates in his hometown of New Bedford, Massachusetts. He shared with them his convictions on the Sabbath; Ellen shared the messages the Lord had given her in vision. Neither party was convinced. Bates found no moral or theological fault with the visions, but did not believe they were divinely inspired. For their part, James and Ellen felt that Elder Bates "erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than the other nine.",

Shortly after James White and Ellen Harmon were married in August of 1846, they carefully studied the Biblical evidence Bates presented in his tract. Finding no way to controvert his material, they began observing the Sabbath. For his part, Bates became a firm believer in the gift of prophecy through Ellen White about two months later.

New Lines of Evidence

As the Sabbath first came to the attention of the Advent believers, it was on the strength of arguments long presented by the Seventh Day Baptists. The major emphasis was placed on the continuing obligation of divine law, the role of the Sabbath as a sign between God and His people, and the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Church for the change of the Sabbath to Sunday. But it was not long before the early Sabbathkeeping Adventists began to see relationships between the Sabbath and their own experience in the Millerite movement.

The study of Daniel 8 had already focused attention on the sanctuary. As this question was examined, it was seen that the only applicable Biblical definition of the sanctuary was the heavenly sanctuary brought most clearly to light in the book of Hebrews. Yet the Revelation also contained references to this sanctuary, or temple. Specifically, the nineteenth verse of chapter eleven describes the opening of the temple of God, revealing to view the ark of the testament. As the earthly ark served as the abiding place of the law of ten commandments, the heavenly ark indicated the continuing significance of the law. And all this occurred in the context of the announcement of the beginning of the "time of the dead, that they should be judged."

Though a more complete understanding of the pre-Advent judgment was still some years away, the Millerites had long seen their movement as a fulfillment of Revelation fourteen's predicted message to "fear God,...for the hour of His judgment is come." The timing certainly seemed to be right for a renewed emphasis on the claims of God's law.

The Millerites could also point to their past experience as a fulfillment of the second angel's message. The announcement of mystical Babylon's fall had found a prominent place in their preaching during the late spring and summer of 1844. As obvious as it may seem in retrospect, however, students of the Advent doctrine paid relatively little attention to the third message of Revelation fourteen. As the understanding of the Sabbath grew in their minds, this was to change. A recognition of the Sabbath's role as a sign between God and His people pointed strongly toward an enhanced understanding of both the mark of the beast and the seal of God. Indeed, the whole concept of the sealing message and work to be done for God's people was found to center on the Sabbath. And the plot grew more sinister as they recognized the connection between the little horn of Daniel—which "thought to change times and laws"—and the role of the Catholic Church in the exaltation of Sunday which had set the stage for the eventual full development of the mark of the beast.

These are the connections which became the driving force behind the renewed interest in Sabbatarianism. Yet they did not become clear and obvious overnight, nor did any one person compile the whole picture. It was a process that took time and effort, that produced conflicting opinions and understandings which needed to be resolved. It was, in short, a process which required patience, humility, earnest study, and the Lord's leading. The result of their effort was a solid platform of truth which has stood unmoved for nearly a century and a half.

The Sabbath as the Seal

And yet, "Sabbath problems" still remain. More basic than matters of employment and religious liberty, there are questions regarding the Sabbath which are crying out for answers. In the years which we have been considering, Joseph Bates stressed repeatedly the relationship of the Sabbath to the sealing of the 144,000. The following comments are typical:

The sign of the Sabbath "was given for all that keep the Sabbath. It never can be a sign to them that do not keep it. Further, the keepers are sanctified by observing it."⁶

"The little company that are now presenting and receiving the sealing message in this last work which God has given them before their deliverance, have got their watch word also, namely: 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' The Sabbath of the Lord our God.' This will develop the residue of the 144,000 and bring them out from mount Ephraim."⁷

"The keeping of God's Sabbath holy sanctifies and saves the soul, but the keeping of one, or all the other nine [commandments] without it will not."⁸

From the very introduction of the truth back in those early years, Ellen White, as well, placed a great deal of importance on the Sabbath. Recounting a vision of the heavenly sanctuary, she describes the appearance of the ten commandments, noting that the first four commandments shone brighter than the other six. "But the fourth (the Sabbath commandment) shone above them all." She was shown that "the holy Sabbath is, and will be, *the* separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers."⁹

How Vital Is Vital?

The interesting feature here is not that the Sabbath is important, nor even that it is vital; but that it is *more* important than other points which we would also consider to be vital. Surely the violation of any of the ten commandments would constitute a "separating wall" between believers and unbelievers. Yet the vision specified the Sabbath as the one commandment which serves this purpose in the preeminent sense. Why?

On November 18, 1848, a small group of believers gathered for worship and study in the town of Dorchester, Massachusetts. Here Ellen White had a vision which again clearly identified the Sabbath as the "sealing truth." As this was one of the "open visions" more common in her early ministry, those in attendance had opportunity to watch and listen firsthand. Joseph Bates, who

was present at the time, made notes of her comments. Among other things, she said, "The commandments never would be struck against if it were not to get rid of the Sabbath commandment...."

"The test upon it [the Sabbath] has been but a short time. All who are saved will be tried upon it in some way. That truth arises and is on the increase, stronger and stronger It's the seal! It's coming up! It arises, commencing from the rising of the sun. Like the sun, first cold, [it] grows warmer and sends its rays.

"When that truth arose there was but little light in it, but it has been increasing. O, the power of these rays!

"It grows in strength, the greatest weight and light is on that truth, for it lasts forever when the Bible is not needed.... O, how mighty is that truth; it's the highest after they enter the goodly land, but it will increase till they are made immortal.

"Yea, all that thou art looking at, thou shalt not see just now. Be careful, let no light be set aside which comes from another way from which thou art looking for."

In concluding his account, Bates assures the reader, "The above was copied word for word as she spake in vision, therefore it's unadulterated.""

Not only in the early years of her ministry did Ellen White place the Sabbath in a position of extraordinary importance; later comments include the following:

"In coming out from the world and accepting the Sabbath of Creation, which God has blessed and sanctified, we give evidence of true conversion. We are stamped with the mark of God's government. As we accept the Sabbath to keep it holy unto the Lord, we are sanctified, soul, body, and spirit...."

"Those who understand that the Sabbath is a sign between them and God will represent the principles of His government by bringing into their daily practice the laws of His kingdom. They will live in constant submission to His will, having the words of His law written in their hearts. His injunctions will be regarded as the spring of their existence. Faithful and true, they will heed every command given, and reveal in their daily lives the religion that emanates from God."u

"True sanctification comes through willing obedience. We are distinctly and decidedly taught that the proper observance of the Sabbath brings a knowledge of what constitutes true sanctification.""

"The Sabbath...was given to all mankind to keep holy, 'that ye may know,' God declares, 'that I am the Lord which do sanctify you.' If the Sabbath is accepted, the rest of the commands in the Decalogue will be obeyed; for no one can truly keep the Sabbath and disregard one precept of the law.""

These statements depict the Sabbath as not just one essential truth among others, but as the capstone or epitome of truth, the true observance of which is made possible only by the observance of all other truths. The opposite relationship is also true, that true obedience to the Sabbath commandment guarantees true obedience to all other commandments. In the simpler language we are used to hearing (but which we seldom ponder),

the Sabbath is the seal of God, placed on His people in its final and fullest extent only when their characters perfectly reflect the likeness of Jesus.

This predicted meaning of the Sabbath is something we would do well to consider. While it holds out the hope of glory and the encouraging prospect of an end to the conflict with sin, it also presents us with a problem of no small magnitude. For, simply put, we have little understanding of how and when the Sabbath will do what we believe it will do.

We must admit that the Sabbath is not yet the hard and fast dividing line between sinners and saints that Inspiration predicts. Many of God's true-hearted children are yet observing Sunday. And a professed observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is not an all-sufficient guarantee of oneness with Christ in character.

Our present understanding of the Sabbath message has failed to produce a clear division between right and wrong, righteous and unrighteous, saved and lost, even within Adventism. Does this not point to a possible weakness in accomplishing that same work (which the Sabbath is predicted to do) on a worldwide scale?

At the same time, world events seem to be rapidly accelerating toward the expected crisis between Sabbathkeepers and the allied powers of Catholicism, apostate Protestantism, and spiritualism. But is this good news, or bad? Do we stand prepared in mind and heart to not only defend our beliefs, but to live them?

Surely it is right to feel a certain impatience for the battle if one can look beyond and see victory. But with the troubling discrepancy remaining between conscientious Sabbath observance (as we know and understand it today) and the consistent, perfect, sanctified obedience to all points of the Decalogue, of which it is the sign and symbol, we are well advised to seek a better understanding of our spiritual weapons before we engage the enemy in a no-holds-barred battle to the death.

Both Scripture and Ellen White testify that the Sabbath holds within it an as yet unrecognized importance. For Adventists, this should come as no surprise; is not the Sabbath to be the final testing truth of all time? And is not the basis of that final test more than just a matter of choosing between two different 24-hour blocks of time? The point is simply this: If the Sabbath is the seal of God placed on those who pass the final test, then the Sabbath must contain within it the significance of the whole law. To observe the Sabbath requires the observance of the whole law. It is a sign, a symbol, of much more than we have routinely thought.

Symbol or Substance?

But as yet, the sign, the symbol, is too easily separated from its meaning. It is too easy to "keep" the Sabbath while breaking the law. The time is coming, however, when that will no longer be possible. Then the Sabbath will indeed be the "separating wall between the true Israel of God and

unbelievers." The troubling questions remain, however, "When will this happen? How will this happen?"

It is here that world events and the possibility of serious persecution take on their most enigmatic aspect. We tend to see the Sabbath as being elevated to new importance—not by a better understanding of its truths—but by the onset of opposition and trouble. "When times get tough, and persecution really breaks out, then the church will be purified." There is truth in this. The church *has* been purified by persecution in the past. But never to the extent predicted to come at the end of time.

Death decrees and even martyrdoms do not ensure that all who are false-hearted will reject their association with divine truth and symbols. There were thousands of Jews who willingly laid down their lives for the symbols which foreshadowed the Messiah. There were far fewer who welcomed the substance of those symbols when He came. And Ellen White warns, "The Sabbath, sanctified and blessed by God, was designed as His great memorial of Creation. It is ever to stand unmoved, a rock of offense, as Christ was to the Jewish nation. The Sabbath is the test today, as Christ was a test to the Jews."¹⁴ Note that Christ was a test to the *Jews*—His own chosen people—before He became a test to the Gentiles.

A sign, a symbol of the greatest import. A truth that is to rise higher and grow stronger until the saints of God inherit the "goodly land." Above all, the sign between God and His people that He has taken upon Himself the responsibility of achieving their sanctification. If this is what we really believe the Sabbath to be, should we not expect our knowledge of it to be growing? Perhaps the counsel given those who first began placing the Sabbath in its last-day setting deserves more consideration than we have given it.

"Yea, all that thou art looking at, thou shalt not see just now. Be careful, let no light be set aside which comes from another way from which thou art looking for."

1. A detailed treatment of this subject is available in P Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*, Eerdmans, (1977), 135-148
2. L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, Review and Herald Publishing Association, (1954), 937-940
3. *Review and Herald*, December 1850, 16
4. *The Midnight Cry*, Editorial, "The Lord's Day," September 5, 1844, 69, (Damsteegt, 137)
5. See *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* 21; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 76
6. Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God; A Hundred Forty-four Thousand of the Servants of God Being Sealed*, (1849), 23
7. *Ibid.*, 54
8. Joseph Bates, *The Seventh Day Sabbath a Perpetual Sign*, (1847), 55
9. *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* 18-19, emphasis supplied
10. Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God; A Hundred Forty-four Thousand of the Servants of God Being Sealed*, (1849), 25-26
11. *Signs of the Times*, November 22, 1899
12. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, 347
13. *Signs of the Times*, March 31, 1898
14. *Ibid.*, December 19, 1900

CHAPTER FIVE

John Norton Loughborough: Beginning Labors

Ability and previous job experience are desirable, but not always necessary, in the Lord's work. Sometimes He requires more than that from His workmen. Sometimes He requires the determination and the faith to set out on a venture with nothing more than His Word and His principles to sustain us. J. N. Loughborough knew something of this experience. His long and fruitful ministry for the Lord began rather inauspiciously, but perhaps it is just the encouragement that many need today.

MY mind was burdened with the conviction that it was my duty to teach to others the truth I had learned. How to do this was to me a difficult problem.

Two years' apprenticeship at carriage work, seven months at school, and two months more of sickness, had left me penniless. Under these circumstances came the conviction to preach.... After a severe struggle with self, and much prayer, I made the decision.... But my stock of clothing was small, and I was too weak to perform much labor. I could only pray, "Lord, open my way." A neighbor who had a quantity of wood to saw said that I could do it as my strength permitted. At this work I succeeded in saving one dollar. This neighbor, out of the kindness of his heart, gave me a vest and a pair of trousers, partly worn, but as he was a man seven inches taller than I, these garments, after I had cut seven inches off the trousers, were far from

being a nice fit. As a substitute for a dress coat, my brother had given me an old double-breasted overcoat, the skirts of which had been cut off. With this curious outfit and the \$1, I decided to go into some section where I was unknown, and make an effort at preaching.

When I was about ready to enter upon my new and untried work, an Adventist brother, who in former times had been an intimate friend of my father, hearing of my intentions, said he was glad to learn of my purpose, and gave me \$3 to help me on my way. With all this encouragement I began my work, first going to Kendall, Orleans County, eighteen miles from any of my acquaintances, to hold my first meeting. The first house at which I called after entering the neighborhood was that of a family who, as I afterward ascertained, were interested in the prophecies. My first embarrassment after enter-

ing the house was caused by an invitation to take off my overcoat, which I could not do as it was the only coat I had. This family gladly entertained me during the meetings without being recompensed. After I had obtained the consent of the Baptist minister and of the trustees for the use of the meeting-house for a series of lectures, the appointment was announced at the close of the village school.

My first discourse was given on the evening of January 2, 1849. Instead of failing in my effort, as I had feared, the Lord gave freedom, and the subject, the Fall of man and the restitution, opened before me with great clearness. The house was full of people. The next day I was informed that seven ministers were in the audience the night before. On the second evening of my meetings the house was crowded. At the close of the discourse the Baptist minister arose and announced that my meetings would continue no longer, as a series of singing schools was to begin in the house the next evening.

Mr. Thompson, from another district, arose, and intimated that the schools were gotten up for the purpose of closing my lectures, and invited me to come to his district and preach in their schoolhouse as long as I wished. He had consulted the trustees, and had their consent; and furthermore, his house should be my home.

The next morning I was invited to visit a family in Kendall. On entering the house I found a room filled with those who were at the meeting the previous evening. Just

as I was comfortably seated, a minister came in, when the following conversation ensued:

"You had a large attendance last night?" "Yes," was my reply, "and they seemed much interested."

"I don't know," said the minister; "I guess they had a curiosity to hear a boy preach. Did I understand you to say last night that the soul is not immortal?" he asked.

"I do not know how you understood me, sir; I said so," was my reply.

"Well," said he, "what do you do with the text that says, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, the death that never dies?'"

"Sir;" said I, "one half of your text is in the hymn book. The expression, 'death that never dies,' is not in the Bible. In Matthew 25:46 we read of everlasting punishment, but that is made plain by reading 2 Thessalonians 1:9, where it is called 'everlasting destruction.'"

"Yes," said he, "I understand that, but there is a text that reads as I said, and it is in the twenty-fifth chapter of Revelation."

"My good sir," said I, "there are only twenty-two chapters in Revelation. I presume your text is three chapters outside of the book."

Waxing very warm, he said, "I tell you it is in the twenty-fifth chapter of Revelation; let me take your Bible, and I will show it to you."

I handed him my Bible; he began turning over the books of the Old Testament, and finally said, "Where is Revelation?" Taking the Bible, I opened to the last chapter of Revelation and showed it to him. He said, "Yes, I see. I would like to talk with you, but I have an engagement."

After he left the room, the friends told me they had been talking with some interest on what they had heard, and he told them to call for me, and he would show them the fallacy of my doctrines in two minutes. I knew this minister had a large library, and was well informed; but while he had studied

many books, the Book of all books had evidently been neglected. And thus began the varied experiences which finally led me to the acceptance of "present truth."

J. N. Loughborough, *The Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists*, 148-150

CHAPTER SIX

The "Letters" Page and Brother Rapp

In the early days of the Advent movement, many believers' only contact with their brethren was through the pages of the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. The February 17, 1853, issue drew attention to this special role of the publication:

SOME of the brethren and sisters, who have not the privilege of meeting with those of like precious faith, have written that the letters published in the *Review* are all the conference meetings they have. This is the case with quite a large portion of our readers. This is the reason why we have published so many letters. This paper contains a large number of

short letters, which will be cheering to at least a portion of the readers of the *Review*. Those who write letters for publication, should guard against a cold formal style. Write as you would speak in meeting, in simple style from the heart, your views and feelings. Then look over what you have written, and strike out useless words, and then copy with care on another sheet.

In the Review and Herald of March 31, 1853, we find the beginning of an interesting exchange of correspondence.

DEAR Brother White: I thank God that I have this opportunity of enclosing in this, five dollars for you. I felt bad when I heard of your wants, and had nothing to help you. But I cannot always do as I would like to, from the fact that I am poor in this world's goods. I have no home here, but I seek one to come. I live in a little shanty in the woods, where the snow and rain come in, whenever it comes. I have a family of five to maintain, and I have no cow to help supply our wants. Yet I speak not this as murmuring, but

that others may have courage. For God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs to the kingdom, which He has promised to those who love Him. "And this is the love of God that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3

I am all alone here, in the cause of truth, and surrounded with the spirit rappings. They are doing great wonders. I have to contend with them on every side, and in so doing am losing the friendship of all. But I will stand for the word of God, if I lose every friend.

When I hear through the *Review* of the little flocks around that can meet together, and sing, and pray, and converse with each other, it makes me feel very lonesome here all alone, as I have not seen any of the brethren since early last fall. Brethren Case, Waggoner, and Phelps were then to our house. How true were the following lines on parting with them.

Your presence, sweet,
our union, dear,
What joys we feel together here!
But when I see
that we must part,
You draw like cords around
my heart.

Yours in love,
William H. Rapp
Markesan, Wisconsin
February 25, 1853

Below the letter was printed a note from the Editor (James White).

DEAR Brother: We return to you a part of the money you sent us. This we think is our duty, considering your circumstances. We should have sent the paper to you just as freely, had you sent nothing, only a statement of your circumstances. You have shown your willingness to sacrifice for the truth's sake, and God will bless you for it. But you will please receive the \$3.00 we return.

Though poor in this world's goods, yet if you are an heir of God, you are rich. And if faithful, you will soon have a share in Abraham's great farm. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Abraham, also, "looked for a City which hath foundations." Those who are of faith will be blest with faithful Abraham, and have a share in Abraham's great house, the New Jerusalem.

Six months passed without further comment. Finally, in the September 27 edition, attentive readers found the sequel to the story.

DEAR Brother White: I received the three dollars which you returned to me, also, the tracts. I could have got along without the money, though it came quite acceptable; but I gave, hoping for nothing in return. Had you been for this world's goods, you would have kept all, whether in need or not. I thank Christ for His word, that by their fruits ye shall know them.

cepted. They wish for the *Review*. They meet with some opposition, but are determined to persevere.

Another brother and his wife have come into the faith, and are living it out. Others are investigating. They have had no preaching here yet, only what the tracts and myself have done.

By means of the tracts you sent, two have resolved to keep the commandments, the fourth not ex-

Yours in love,
William H. Rapp
Markesan, Wisconsin
September 20, 1853

CHAPTER SEVEN

James White on Laodicea

In what appeared to many as a time of prosperity, Elder James White took the lead in pointing out the state of spiritual poverty brought to light in the "Laodicean message." Writing in the Review and Herald of "Fifth-day, October 9, 1856," he posed a series of pointed questions.

THE inquiry is beginning to come up afresh, "Watchman, what of the night?" At present there is space for only a few questions, asked to call attention to the subject to which they relate. A full answer, we trust, will soon be given.

1. Do the seven churches, (Revelation 2:11) represent seven conditions of the true church, in seven periods of time?

2. If so, then is the view erroneous that the Philadelphian and the Laodicean states both exist at the same time?

3. Does "the church in Sardis" represent the nominal churches to whom the Advent message was first given?

4. And does "the church in Philadelphia" represent the church of God in her state of consecration and "brotherly love," looking for the coming of Jesus in 1844?

5. If so, is not the present time the period for the Laodicean condition of the church?

6. Does not the state of the Laodiceans (lukewarm, neither cold nor hot) fitly illustrate the condition of the body of those who profess the Third Angel's Message?

7. Are not the nominal churches, and the nominal Adventists (as bodies), to all intents and purposes, "cold"?

8. Then where is the "lukewarm" church, unless it be those who profess the Third Message?

9. And is not this our real condition as people?

10. Does riot the prophecy answer perfectly to the facts?

11. If this be our condition as a people, have we any real grounds to hope for the favor of God unless we heed the "counsel" of the True Witness?

The next Review contained Elder White's elaboration of the subject, titled "The Seven Churches." Here he set forth his belief that the churches of Revelation represented "seven conditions of the Christian church, in seven periods of time, covering the ground of the entire Christian age." He also made an impassioned plea for all to see and avert the danger before them.

LAODICEA signifies "the judging of the people," or, according to Cruden, "a just people," and fitly represents the present state of the church, in the great day of atonement, or judgment of the "house of God" while the just and holy law of God is taken as a rule of life.

It has been supposed that the Philadelphia church reached to the end. This we must regard as a mistake, as the seven churches in Asia represent seven distinct periods of the true church, and the Philadelphian is the sixth, and not the last state. The true church cannot be in two conditions at the same time; hence we are shut up to the faith that the Laodicean church represents the church of God at the present time.

The conditional promises to the Philadelphia church are yet to be fulfilled to that portion of that church who comply with the conditions, pass down through the Laodicean state and overcome.

But dear brethren, how humbling to us as a people is the sad description of this church. And is not this dreadful description a most perfect picture of our present condition? It is; and it will be of no use to try to evade the force of this searching testimony to the Laodicean church. The Lord help us to receive it, and to profit by it. What language could better describe our condition as a people than this addressed to the Laodiceans? "Neither hot nor cold," but "lukewarm." It will not do, brethren, to apply this to the nominal churches; they are to all intents and purposes "cold." And the nominal Adventists are even lower than the churches,

who justly look down upon them with horror for the infidel views held by many of them of no Sabbath, no family prayer, no Devil, no operation of the Holy Ghost, no pre-existence of the Son of God, and no resurrection of the unjust.

The word "hot" represents the fervency, zeal, and good works which are in accordance with the Scriptures. This is not our condition; yet the feeble efforts put forth by us as a people are such that we cannot be said to be "cold." We are "lukewarm."...

God's honest people will feel greatly rebuked and chastened by this description of their condition, and they will repent, heartily, zealously; but from the words "as many," etc., we may fear for some whose self-righteousness and self-dependence have carried them beyond the reach of the reproofing Spirit and the counsel of the True Witness. Dear brethren, read and weep over the touching language from His lips which follows. It is for you.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." How careless many of you have been of the reproofs and warning which the dear Saviour has given for your benefit. He has been slighted and shut out by you till His locks are wet with the dew of night. Oh, open your hearts to Him. Let your hard hearts break before Him. Oh, let Him in. A deep work of consecrating yourselves and all you have to Him, will be necessary to prepare the way for Him to come in and sup with you and you with Him.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Revive Us Again

THE enduring words of William Mackay's old hymn are elegant and inspiring:

"Revive us again; fill each heart with thy love;
May each soul be rekindled with fire from above.
Hallelujah! thine the glory,
Hallelujah! amen;
Hallelujah! thine the glory,
Revive us again."

They are beautiful words, and well might we sing them with conviction and earnestness. But dare we? Do we have any just idea of what revival and reformation entail, that we should so glibly petition the Lord that He might bring them upon us? Are we ready for that?

Yet certainly we know well enough the folly of remaining in the lethargic state of unrevival. Who would dare to knowingly choose the fate of the one who spurns the heavenly gifts of white raiment, eyesalve, and gold tried in the fire?

We know of our need for revival; but revival in what, and how to obtain it we seemingly know not. Would God really leave us in such a state? Have we no sure guide that we might find the source of true revival while shunning the devil's ingenious counterfeits which appear at every hand?

"Revival" is nothing new. It has been an essential part of the salvation process since the first sin of Adam. Throughout Scripture examples of revival and reformation abound, placed there for our benefit. In more modern times, as well, the records of God's last-day church provide numerous case histories of revivals from which we may learn. To neglect this instruction can only be at the peril of our souls; to heed it can only be to our salvation.

The experience of Adam and Eve at the time of their fall is, in many ways, typical of all our experience. "After Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin before God and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion."¹

Needless to say, Adam was in need of revival. And the Lord in His mercy sought a way to bring this needed work to his heart. "The sacrifice demanded by their transgression revealed to Adam and Eve the sacred character of the

law of God; and they saw, as they had never seen before, the guilt of sin and its dire results. In their remorse and anguish they pleaded that the penalty might not fall upon Him whose love had been the source of all their joy; rather let it descend upon them and their posterity.

"They were told that since the law of Jehovah is the foundation of His government in heaven as well as upon the earth, even the life of an angel could not be accepted as a sacrifice for its transgression. Not one of its precepts could be abrogated or changed to meet man in his fallen condition; but the Son of God, who had created man, could make an atonement for him."²

Revival had come to the estranged heart of Adam. And God ordained that that which had produced the blessed result should ever be kept in mind. The simple truths of the immutability of the law of God and the amazing love of One who would give His life that man might once again live in the home of his innocence were often impressed on Adam's mind through the slaying of innocent animals.

"The sacrificial offerings were ordained by God to be to man a perpetual reminder and a penitential acknowledgment of his sin and a confession of his faith in the promised Redeemer. They were intended to impress upon the fallen race the solemn truth that it was sin that caused death. To Adam, the offering of the first sacrifice was a most painful ceremony. His hand must be raised to take life, which only God could give. It was the first time he had ever witnessed death, and he knew that had he been obedient to God, there would have been no death of man or beast. As he slew the innocent victim, he trembled at the thought that his sin must shed the blood of the spotless Lamb of God. This scene gave him a deeper and more vivid sense of the greatness of his transgression, which nothing but the death of God's dear Son could expiate. And he marveled at the infinite goodness that would give such a ransom to save the guilty."³

We might stop at this point, if we wish, for the story of revival and reformation has been told. Though the tale has been repeated countless times, the essential features have never varied. A neglect to follow the Word of God leads to sin; sin produces death, and the only hope of the sinner lies in the life and death of the Redeemer in his behalf. As the guilty one senses his lost condition, realizes his debt to God, and comes to understand to some extent the amazing love of his Saviour, he is led to confess his sin and to return to careful obedience to all the Word of God through the power of divine grace. *This is revival and reformation.* All else is soul-destroying fraud.

Does that sound too simple? Not profound enough, perhaps? Nonetheless, it is the Biblical understanding of revival. And it is needed truth in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At least Ellen White found reason to repeatedly stress its importance.

"A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work."⁴

"God's people will not endure the test unless there is a revival and a reformation. The Lord will not admit into the mansions He is preparing for the righteous, one soul who is self-sufficient."⁵

"God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.

'A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend."⁶

But How...?

But how can it be done? How can revival be brought to our hearts, to our churches, and to the world? It is an undeniable fact that no reformation has yet been successful in bringing the work of God to its final completion. Is there yet hope that it *will* be done?

Of course. No Seventh-day Adventist could for a moment doubt the fulfillment of the Lord's pledged word to see His work to fruition. And pledged it is: "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children."⁷

Revival and reformation *will* come, but only in accordance with the conditions laid down by Inspiration. Would it not be well for us to note those conditions? "*It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among His professed people.*" Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Jeremiah 6:16."s

On the pledged word of God we know that revival and reformation will come. His Word also declares that only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position may we expect this to happen. Simple logic makes it painfully obvious that we should be looking for—and hastening—the restoration of the law of God to its rightful position.

With that as a background, let us look at one of the most noteworthy examples of revival and reformation in our denominational history.

Laodicea, 1856

The official position of Sabbathkeeping Adventists was that they were represented in Scripture under the symbol of the Philadelphian church. Official, that is, until it was called into question by James White in an editorial in the *Review and Herald* of October 9, 1856. Considerable discussion followed, **but it** is safe to say that by the end of November the majority of "the little flock" (remember, not until 1863 would the "Seventh-day Adventist Church"

come into existence) were in agreement that the uncomplimentary words of the Laodicean message were addressed to *them*.

"During the fourteen months from November 1856, through the year 1857, 348 items appeared in the *Review* on the Laodicean message. Of them, James White or other editorial writers accounted for sixteen. Seventy came from ministers, the other 262 from lay members. In view of the small number of Sabbath observers at the time, it represented a large response."⁹

The "Communications" department of the *Review* literally overflowed with letters telling of the effect of the message. There was, as might be expected, some resistance to such an unfavorable application, but in nearly every letter the story is told of acceptance and blessing. The following excerpts from a letter written by a Dexter Daniels of New Boston, Massachusetts, are fairly representative:

"I am fully convinced that the admonition to the Laodiceans is to us. The message found me in that state, I must confess. At first I was almost unwilling to believe that it was for me; but on an examination of my own heart I found that I was the man....

"I believe that the latter rain will soon come and God has sent out the admonition to His church to get ready for it. We cannot be waiting unless we are ready. So He tells us to be zealous and repent, get ready for a baptism of fire or the Holy Ghost. In order to be ready we must be pure in body and soul.... We must purify ourselves, for he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure. The ark of the covenant was pure gold, within and without. God's holy law was deposited therein. So if God's holy law is written in our hearts, we must be pure within and without.

"I rejoice this night that God has sent the warning to get ready for the latter rain; for unless we are clean the Spirit will not fall upon us. We must fit our temples for it, then He will come in and sup with us and we with Him....

"In conclusion I would say, Let us be zealous and repent, buy that gold tried in the fire, that we may be rich, and white raiment that we may be clothed that the shame of our nakedness do not appear, and anoint our eyes with eyesalve that we may see. It appears to me that this is the last call to the church to get ready, and unless we do, we shall soon be purged out."¹⁰

It is noteworthy, too, that some of the most impressive letters of confession and reconsecration were from members of the ministry." This response of the ministry, coming up to the support of the call for revival begun by James White, must have exerted a profound influence upon the scattered believers.

Decline of the Message

A profound impression, probably; but a lasting impression? Regrettably not. Over a period of months the message to the Laodiceans gradually faded from memory. We can gain a clearer insight into this unfortunate development through the pen of Ellen White.

Testimony for the Church, Number Four (now found in *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 154-184) was published in late 1857. In its closing pages is an account of God's plan for the Laodicean message. It was entitled "The Shaking." As might have

been expected, God's plan for this revival was that it should culminate in the second coming of Christ.

When Ellen White next wrote for general publication (1859), her first chapter bore the title "The Laodicean Church." Now found in *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 185-195, the passage deserves careful consideration. She confirms that "nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel." Unfortunately, though, "as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message."

Why? "Because of the hardness of their hearts." Because they "moved from feeling, not from principle and faith." Because they found that the message struck "directly at some cherished idol." Because they were "not willing to closely examine themselves." Because of their "pride," their "love to follow the fashions of the world," their "vain and empty conversation," and because of their "selfishness."

In short, the revival failed because the accompanying reformation required more of them than they were willing to give. "*It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among His professed people.*"¹²

Has God cast aside His people? Certain individuals, no doubt; but still we are assured that "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children."¹³

Yet we are forced to admit that this revival is long overdue. There have, it is true, been notable revivals in the years since 1859. In 1888, at Minneapolis. In the 1920s and early 1930s. And again in the early 1970s.¹⁴ Again and again the Lord has sought ways to reach the wayward hearts of His people. Certainly we cannot place the blame on Him. But just as certainly then, there must be something which we as a people can do as a practical means of preparing the way for such a revival and reformation as has never yet been seen among God's children.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."¹⁵

The answer to our dilemma lies in the old truths of revival and reformation, in the restoration of the law of God to its rightful position. Not as a means of salvation—for it is powerless to save the sinner—but as the measure of the efficacy of the grace of Christ in the life. Do our lives fall short of the inspired standard? It can only be because we have neglected the grace of the Saviour.

Importance of the Ministry

Would we encourage revival in the church? Then let us encourage revival among the ministry. Today, as in 1857, the influence of the ministry will be a power in the church, either for good or for evil. In a special sense they have a role to play in the reception of the message to Laodicea. It is to them—the angel of the church—that it is addressed.¹⁶

A reformation is needed among the people, but it should first begin its purifying work with the ministers."¹⁷

"When ministers realize the necessity of thorough reformation in themselves, when they feel that they must reach a higher standard, their influence upon the churches will be uplifting and refining."

Obviously this is not at all akin to a blanket condemnation of all ministers, but rather a statement of the power of influence which they possess. But someone will object, "My minister is not a godly man; how will reformation ever come to my church?"

Sad though it is, there probably has never been a completely pure ministry. Even in Ellen White's day she was forced to admit: "There are sinners in the ministry."¹⁹ But take heart, the Lord is never at a loss, no matter how difficult the situation. "We have been inclined to think that where there are no faithful ministers, there can be no true Christians; but this is not the case. God has promised that where the shepherds are not true He will take charge of the flock Himself. God has never made the flock wholly dependent upon human instrumentalities."²⁰

The Lord "has said, 'I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.' Revelation 3:8. Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time."²¹

Then let us take courage in the goodness of God. Not that He will consent to accept our faulty service, but that He will empower us to live in harmony with His righteous law. Let us work intelligently for revival and reformation, knowing what it will cost, but counting it as less than the dust on the balance in comparison with the excellency of the privilege of serving Him. And let us sing with William Mackay, *Revive us again*.

1. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 637-638

2. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 66

3. *Ibid.*, 68

4. *Review and Herald*, March 22, 1887

5. *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 285

6. *Review and Herald*, February 25, 1902

7. *The Great Controversy*, 464

8. *Ibid.*, 478, emphasis supplied

9. Felix A. Lorenz, *The Only Hope*, Southern Publishing Association, (1976), 38

10. *Review and Herald*, February 5, 1857, 110

11. See M. E. Cornell's "Confession," *Ibid.*, 109, and "Communication from Bro. Hutchins," *Ibid.*, April 9, 1857, 184

12. *The Great Controversy*, 478, emphasis supplied

13. *Ibid.*, 464

14. See *Annual Council 1973/1974 Appeals*

15. Jeremiah 6:16

16. See Revelation 1:20 and *Gospel Workers*, 13-14

17. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 469

18. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 145

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 80

21. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 107

CHAPTER NINE

The Need of Revival

For more than a century there has been a recognition among the leaders of God's cause that the final resolution of the church's work on earth will come only with widespread revival and reformation throughout her ranks. As watchmen on Zion's walls they have often sounded the call for renewed consecration, heartfelt repentance, and a turning from sin. Those calls—so true in their day—deserve to be heard again today.

AS I have of late looked around to find the humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, my mind has been much exercised. Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are becoming conformed to this world and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since separated. The words addressed to the Laodicean church describe their present condition perfectly."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 10, 1852

"God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation.... Revival without reformation leads only to sentimental change of feeling, which naturally reverts to the old level."—Ellen G. White, *Ibid.*, February 25, 1902

"It has never been experienced by us. What a sad fact.... The fault was with the church. We have been unheeding of the message."—A. G. Daniells (General Conference Presi-

dent, 1901-1922), *Ibid.*, January 10, 1924

"There is setting in on this people a tide of worldliness to which we are surrendering. I do not mean to imply that we are not resisting these influences at all; but I believe that the measure of resistance that we are putting forth is not holding us. We are gradually being swept backward, and should be alarmed about it; ...our resistance of worldly influences is seriously diminishing.... I am troubled by the direction that our educational and training work is definitely taking. I am concerned by the more and more obvious fact that in the education and training of our workers we are inquiring more of the world and less of God than formerly. I am grieved because we are allowing the erroneous belief that the highest in standards is reached by the ways of the world rather than by the ways of God."—C. H. Watson (General Conference President, 1930-1936), *Ibid.*, November 2, 1935

" 'We have more to fear from within than without. The hindrances

to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world.' [E. G. White] Our greatest danger today is the attitude taken by so many of our people of accepting with apparent satisfaction their present low spiritual condition and not being very much concerned about it.... The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. What we need today is a people revived with new spiritual power, a church reformed and turned away from the world.... There has come into the church a listlessness, a carelessness that is deplorable."—J. L. McElhany (General Conference President, 1936-1950), *Ibid.*, December 3, 1936

"Before the coming of the Lord His church will experience a great revival and reformation.... Is not this revival due now?"—E. M. Wilcox (Editor of *The Review and Herald*, 1911-1934), *Ibid.*, June 26, 1947

"We are not so faithful and zealous for God and the Truth as we once were, and the end of the world is just upon us.... We need that revival now. It is the greatest of all our needs."—W. H. Branson (General Conference President, 1950-1954), *Ibid.*, December 16, 1950

"What we lack is power—yet it does not come. Should we not diagnose the true situation in which we find ourselves, and no longer remain in a disappointing expectancy of something that does not appear?... Why is the Spirit being withheld?... Must we with shamefacedness confess that we have been afraid honestly and sincerely to face, find, and follow His divine guidance? Have we feared to face the issue in our lives?"—L. K. Dickson (General Vice

President of the General Conference, 1947-1958), *Ibid.*, July 16, 1953

"Why hasn't the work been finished? Why hasn't Jesus come, and why aren't the saints in the kingdom? Today we are still in the land of the enemy. It is a matter of character development, some say. Others declare the great commission has not been fulfilled—the Advent message has not as yet been proclaimed as a witness to all nations. Still others contend that the church has not fully accepted the message of righteousness by faith as presented at the 1888 General Conference session held in Minneapolis; hence the loud cry has not sounded, the work is not finished, and we are still here. All of these explanations may be contributing factors, but I want to give you another thought worth pursuing, worth your prayerful consideration when you wonder about the delay in the Lord's return.

"Read these words of God's last-day prophet thoughtfully. They were written in the year 1901: 'We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.' *Evangelism*, 696

"Insubordination is disregard for authority—in this instance disregard for the authority of the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy—disregard for the counsel God has so clearly and so graciously given his last-day people."—R. H. Pierson (General Conference President, 1966-1977), *Ibid.*, December 13, 1973

CHAPTER TEN

The Medical Mission

A DOUBTFUL remedy, so they say, is better than no remedy at all. Logic of this nature could be objected to, especially when considering medical practices of the early 1800s. It was exciting adventure, though, this wholesale experimentation on a hapless public. And it did produce results. Observant physicians had ample opportunity to learn the effects of such "medicines" as calomel, mercury, opium, arsenic, and strychnine.

A hundred and more years later, the good doctors' efforts may strike us as absurd, or even humorous; at the time, people were dying. Fortunately, a few individuals realized that something must be wrong. The "science" of medicine needed rethinking. But where to begin?

By the 1840s, a start had been made on several fronts. European physicians seemed somewhat more willing to leave off the practice of "drugging" than their American counterparts, but individuals such as Dr. Jacob Bigelow and Oliver Wendell Holmes played an active role in challenging the system in the United States. Samuel Thompson and Edward Hitchcock pointed out the value of natural remedies and a rational approach to prevention of disease. Cleanliness, proper sleep, exercise, and a simple, wholesome diet (often vegetarian) were approved, while tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, grease, tight clothing, and stale air were roundly condemned.

Best remembered of these early reformers is Sylvester Graham. A former Presbyterian preacher, he advocated a well-masticated vegetarian diet. Especially did he emphasize the importance of cereal foods, preferably made from unrefined flour. (One can only wonder what his reaction would be if he were shown the modern version of a Graham cracker.) A controversial figure on account of his virulent attacks on all opponents, even he found himself upstaged by a newcomer on the "natural health" circuit.

Mrs. Mary Gove and Dr. Joel Shew brought attention to a natural curative that was plentiful, inexpensive, and amazingly effective. Shew's *Water Cure Journal*, first published in 1846 grew under the editorship of Dr. Russell I. Trall to a circulation of 30,000 by 1851. With hydrotherapy's new-found popularity, the generic title of "Water Cure Institution" became familiar to the public. The most successful was "Our Home on the Hillside," operated at Dansville, New York, by Dr. J. C. Jackson and his adopted daughter, Dr. Harriet Austin. Here, for nearly forty years, patients received water treatments ranging from increased water consumption, to hot packs, to the "heroic" cold plunge.

Still, in the midst of progress, there were problems. Dr. Trall, for example, completely banned salt from the diet, declaring it to be only a "chemical" and thus lacking "vital action." He denied organic chemistry as a contradiction of terms, asserting that the body did not employ the principle of chemistry in any way. To further complicate matters, the adherents of spiritism soon began to accept and advocate certain distinctive aspects of health reform. Conscientious Christians who accepted the Bible's identification of spiritism as satanic activity had strong reservations about being associated in any way with such a movement.

The questions became clear—what were to be the guidelines in the intelligent development of a Christian health work? And where were these to be found?

First Major Vision on Health

For the members of the newly organized Seventh-day Adventist Church, these questions met partial solution on Friday evening, June 5, 1863. In an evening worship service **held in the** Hilliard home at Otsego, Michigan, Ellen White received instruction.

The vision presented the "sacred duty to attend to our health, and arouse others to their duty." This point more than any other formed the basis for Adventism's unique contribution to the field of health. Proper diet, natural remedies, rest, fresh air, and a host of valuable specific points had been (or would be) discovered by medical science. But it was (and still is) the role of physical health in aiding spiritual growth that caused Mrs. White's counsel to stand alone.'

Three years later, J. H. Waggoner expressed it well: 'As mere physiological and hygienic truths, [the principles of health reform] might be studied by some at their leisure, and by others laid aside as of little consequence; but when placed on a level with the great truths of the third angel's message by the sanction of God's Spirit, and so declared to be the means whereby a weak people may be made strong to overcome, and our diseased bodies cleansed and fitted for translation, then it comes to us as an essential part of present truth, to be received with the blessing of God, or rejected at our peril.'

As always, great principles called for specific application. How did one go about "attending to" his health? Control the appetite; eliminate objectionable foods such as meat and irritants; cultivate cleanliness; open living quarters to the benefits of fresh air and sunshine; obey natural law; practice temperance in labor, eating, and drinking; avoid drugs and let nature work its own healing (though assistance might be given through simple remedies).³

For two and a half years the results of this teaching went forward within the ranks of the church. On Christmas Day, 1865, new progress was called for. The second major "health vision" indicated the need for a denominationally owned and operated health institution. This enterprise was not to be merely a reflection of then-existing water cures, but rather an institution which would make available to both the church and the world the united gospel of physical

and spiritual restoration. For the small group of earnest believers, the undertaking was monumental.

The Western Health Reform Institute opened its doors on the fifth of September, 1866. Admittedly modest in its early days, the institution opened with a ten-room facility, two physicians, two bath attendants, several "helpers," and one patient. Growth was somewhat spasmodic for the next decade, but by 1876 the institution boasted 100 beds. The stage was set for great things.

J. H. Kellogg

As it happened, great things came wrapped up in a five-foot-four-inch whirlwind named John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.

It was only under some duress from church leaders that John consented to accept—for a period of one year—the position of Medical Director. He believed he could improve the Health Institute, but he also recognized that—at only 23 years of age, and somewhat boyish looking at that—he might not strike others as the "Medical Director type."

His premonitions proved partly correct. As a result of his appointment, 40 percent of the patients on hand opted to seek medical help elsewhere. Many men would find the situation discouraging; Doctor John didn't seem to notice. Instead, he inaugurated a host of changes designed to improve the efficiency and image of the institution.

Not stopping to seek approval from the board of directors, he renamed the Health Institute. Since no one objected to its being called The Battle Creek Sanitarium, the new name stayed. There was, however, some question as to what the difference was between a sanatorium, and a sanitarium. The doctor explained that the new term would come to mean a place where people learned to stay well.

At the end of his first year, the issue of Dr. Kellogg's continuing as Medical Director was never questioned. He did—until his death in 1943, sixty-seven years later. It was an era that Battle Creek—and the Adventist Church—would never forget.

With Kellogg's indomitable drive and enthusiasm, the work at Battle Creek went forward quickly. He soon distinguished himself as an extremely talented physician, and the Sanitarium gained a worldwide reputation for excellence. About 1891, Dr. Kellogg revealed to one of his assistants his secret for staying five years ahead of the medical profession:

"He said when a new thing is brought out in the medical world he knew from his knowledge of the Spirit of Prophecy whether it belonged in our system or not. If it did, he instantly adopted it and advertised it while the rest of the doctors were slowly feeling their way, and when they finally adopted it he had five years the start of them.

"On the other hand when the medical profession were swept off their feet by some new fad, if it did not fit the light we had received he simply did not touch it. When the doctors finally discovered their mistake they wondered how it came that Dr. Kellogg did not get caught."⁴

Kellogg kept ahead, not only by knowing what to accept and what to reject from outside sources, but also by knowing which direction to head in his own work. The counsels of Ellen White served him well as a touchstone. This advantage, coupled with his own ingenuity, led to a remarkable list of inventions and achievements:

In a time when it was expected that 15 to 20 per cent of abdominal surgery patients would die, Dr Kellogg set a world record of 165 successive operations without a fatality.

Kellogg's interest in proper dietary led to the development of some of our most familiar foods—corn flakes, peanut butter, and granola, to name a few. In all, he had part in inventing more than seventy food items. Never did he profit substantially in a financial way from these inventions. Speaking of peanut butter, he said it was a product that "the world ought to have; let everybody that wants it have it, and make the best use of it."

The doctor's interest in exercise led to the invention of several mechanical exercise tools. Among these was the universal dynamometer, used for a quarter of a century at the U.S. Naval Academy to accurately measure the strength of various muscle groups.

Medical Philosophy

Having taken a look at the fruitage of the health message, let's pause a moment to note the underlying philosophy. We have previously mentioned the spiritual emphasis, but what was the physiological and medical platform upon which the work was built? The writings of Ellen White exemplify the basic groundwork, yet it is enlightening to see the concepts expressed in medical terms, and by medical personnel. The *Medical Missionary Yearbook* of 1896 gives us such a glimpse:

"Restoration to health is not to be secured by swallowing pills, regular or irregular, nor by the use of patent medicines or nostrums, nor indeed by any other means than by the removal of the causes of the disease, and the cultivation of health. The education of the invalid, and the training of the body by proper regimen, judicious diet, suitable exercise, etc., constitute the only means by which the cure of chronic maladies can be effected. To accomplish this, all the patient's habits of life must be controlled, and brought to conform to such principles as will modify his disordered propensities in the most effectual manner."⁵

Demise of Battle Creek

In every life some rain must fall. And it appears to be true of every group, cause, and organization as well. A particularly sad portion of Adventist medical history is the falling away of Dr. Kellogg and the consequential tumult which shook Battle Creek. This unfortunate turn of events can be traced to two primary causes: the Doctor's inordinate desire to control everything with which he was connected, and his involvement with the deceptive teachings of theosophy.

That John Kellogg was an energetic, ambitious individual is obvious from the schedule he kept and the work he accomplished. It is also clear, from his associations with anyone he might have perceived as a rival, that he held his own interests paramount when it came to influence and power in the work of the Sanitarium. The incident of unilaterally changing the institution's name was a foreshadowing of what was to take place in later years.

It is a matter of conjecture, of course, but it seems likely that his short stature contributed to this problem. It was not uncommon for Dr. Kellogg to point out the "advantages" of being short—but close friends believed this to be only a mask for his fond wish to be six feet tall.

Throughout his life he seemed compelled to demonstrate his abilities by directing and dominating others, including the ministers and leadership of the Adventist Church. Naturally, this was a source of consternation. Not, however, until this trait was mingled with the teachings of theosophy did it result in an open rupture of relations between Dr. Kellogg and the denomination.

Theosophy, a philosophical first-cousin of the spiritualism which had concerned Adventists in the 1850s, taught that man was in reality divine. Through a combination of eastern mysticism and contact with supernatural powers, it proposed to cultivate mankind's "inherent goodness." The ultimate goal was the merger of the soul with the great cosmic essence.

Unfortunately, the milder forms of this philosophy proved fatally captivating to the inquisitive mind of John Harvey Kellogg. Shunning the most blatant errors, the doctor became beguiled with the concept of a "divine presence" pervading all forms of life, and even inanimate matter. Needless to say, theosophy proved incompatible with Christianity, contradicting as it did the clearest and most basic of Biblical doctrines.

As these doctrinal deviations developed in the doctor's mind during the early years of this century, Ellen White agonized over the turn of events. At stake were both John Harvey's spiritual welfare and the control of the church's largest single institution. In the end, it seemed that the damage done was irreparable. November 10, 1907, Dr. Kellogg's name was dropped from the church books. He had not met with them in worship for several years.

Fourteen months later, twenty-eight of the nearly 700 members of the Battle Creek Sanitarium Association exercised an entirely legal, but little-noticed, provision in the organization's charter which empowered them to expel fellow members. Included among the 128 members thus dismissed from the Association were all of Kellogg's principal critics within the denomination. For all practical purposes, the Battle Creek Sanitarium ceased to be an Adventist institution.

1. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 280

2. *Review and Herald*, August 7, 1866

3. See *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4, 120-151. This is one of the earliest of Ellen White's writings on health.

4. "How Kellogg Kept Ahead," E. G. White Publications, Document File 45 (Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History*, Southern Publishing Association, (1975), 144)

5. *Medical Missionary Yearbook*, 1896, 19-20

CHAPTER ELEVEN

David Paulson on Hydrotherapy

Among denominational members, health and the proper treatment of disease have long been topics of lively interest. It is not unusual, then, that the treatment of malaria should be discussed in the midst of the church's General Conference session. Such was the case in 1907, when the following report was given by Dr. David Paulson. It may be found in the General Conference Bulletin of that year.

NATURALLY quinine was considered just as indispensable in malaria as morphine was thought to be following certain surgical operations. We soon had an abundant opportunity to put our principles in regard to quinine to a practical test. It happened to be a malarial summer in Michigan. During the summer something like fifty cases came to us in all ages and in all stages of the disease. Dr. Kress and I, who could not consistently reconcile the prevailing routine quinine program with some of the truths we had studied, determined we would discover for ourselves what God would help us to do in malarial cases without quinine. One member of our class was an enthusiastic advocate of quinine. It was mutually agreed that as the patients came in, one was to be assigned to this physician, the next one to Dr. Kress and myself, so alternating. As he was also an expert in the use of the microscope having taken special training in blood work,

he carefully checked every case, not only his own, but ours, by laboratory work, so that there was no chance for guess work.

We carefully took the temperature every fifteen minutes. As soon as there began to be the least rise of temperature, that was a notification to us that the chill was approaching. We at once put the patient into a hot blanket pack, bringing on profound perspiration, and thereby—if we had hit it right—we invariably prevented the chill. The patient perspired for a time; we took him out carefully, and, provided it was the alternate-day variety, we gave tonic treatments (hot and cold). The following day we again instituted the temperature-taking program. We invariably found that the rise of temperature was much delayed, showing that we were gaining the ascendancy. We would then go through the same program. Frequently we did not have to do this the third time; the work had been

done, and in a week or ten days the patient was fully restored to health. Sometimes we would miss hitting it just right for several days, so there would be a delay.

One day an old, feeble, broken-down man came in so loaded with malaria that it seemed he was on the brink of the grave. According to the rotation he belonged to the quinine list. The doctor, after sizing up the

situation, said he did not dare to undertake his case, and he was turned over to our list. I will never forget when Dr. Kress and I earnestly told the Lord that His principles were on test, and pleaded with Him to vindicate what He had said. We then took hold of the case. Within a week the man was restored to health. Praise the Lord.

After History Comparison of the Two Clinics:

Quinine Patients: Some with deafness—irreparable; impaired mentality; others with numerous minor complications.

Blanket-Pack Patients: Not one with serious complications.

Note: The cases of malaria which Drs. Paulson and Kress treated were the form of the disease common in the western world. This form is caused by the protozoa Plasmodium Vivax, whereas the more serious form indigenous to Africa is caused by Plasmodium Falciparum. While the measures outlined by Drs. Paulson and Kress are very effective in cases of Vivax, they have not proven successful in dealing with Falciparum.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Organizing Churches

The church, we are told, is still the church militant rather than the church triumphant, and when humanity gets involved, problems develop. The Adventist pioneers were no strangers to this phenomenon. Elder John Loughborough, the first historian of the Advent Movement, has left on record the following accounts.

THERE was a matter of difficulty between some parties that had to be adjusted at the beginning of our meeting [held in November of 1858 near Clinton, Massachusetts]. While this was going on, one zealous brother from Connecticut arose, and said, "If you would do as we do in Connecticut, you would never need to have any church trials."

Brother White inquired, "How do you do down in Connecticut?"

"Well," said the brother, "when any one there does us a wrong, we just go right on, and pay no attention to it."

"Well," said Brother White, "I do not think the devil himself would have any trouble with anybody, if all did that way—just let him serve them as he has a mind to, and go right on and pay no attention to it, as though nothing had happened. But there is one command in the Gospel, which I wish to read to the brother. It is found in Luke, 'Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times

in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.' (Luke 17:3,4) What do you do with that down in Connecticut?"

The brother replied, "I do not think we have noticed that text."

Meanwhile the investigation went on, and soon a fair understanding was reached. The parties were in harmony, and the Connecticut man had a practical illustration of a better plan than what he had at first proposed.

On November 24, 1862, two meetings were held at the same hour in the house of William Wilson, of Greenville, [Michigan,] for the purpose of organizing two churches for those who had accepted the Sabbath truth in that vicinity. The meeting for the Greenville Church was conducted by Elder White and his wife in one room, while Elder Byington and myself had charge of a meeting in another room for the West Plains Church. While we were engaged in the preliminary work in one room, **we could hear the voice of Mrs. White as she bore her testimony in the other room.**

We were meeting with some difficulties in our work, when just at the opportune time Mrs. White opened the door, and said, "Brother Loughborough, I see by looking over this company that I have Testimonies for some of the persons present. When you are ready, I will come in and speak." That being just the time we needed help, she came in. Aside from Elder Byington and myself, she knew the names of only three persons in the room. The others were strangers, whom she had never seen, only as they had been presented to her in vision.

As she arose to speak, she said: "You will have to excuse me in relating what I have to say, if I describe your persons, as I do not know your names. As I see your countenances, there comes before me what the Lord has been pleased to show me concerning you. That man in the corner with one eye (some one spoke, saying, "His name is Pratt"), makes high professions, and great pretensions to religion, but he has never yet been converted. Do not take him into the church in his present condition, for he is not a Christian.

He spends much of his time idling about the shops and stores, arguing the theory of the truth, while his wife at home has to cut the firewood, and look after the garden. He makes promises in his bargains that he does not fulfill. His neighbors have no confidence in his profession of religion. It would be better for the cause of religion, for him, in his present condition, to say nothing about it."

She continued, saying, "This aged brother (as she pointed to him, some one said, "Brother Barr") was shown me in direct contrast with the other man. He is very exemplary in his life, careful to keep all his promises, and provides well for his family. He hardly ventures to speak of the truth to his neighbors, for fear he will mar the work and do harm. He does not see how the Lord can be so merciful as to forgive his sins, and thinks himself unfit even to belong to the church."

She then said to him, "Brother Barr, the Lord bade me to say to you that you have confessed all the sins you knew of, and that He forgave your sins long ago, if you would only believe it."

The look of sadness depicted on the brother's countenance quickly fled. He looked up with a smile, and said, in his simplicity, "Has He?"

"Yes," responded Mrs. White, "and I was told to say to you, 'Come along, and unite with the church; and as you have opportunity, speak a word in favor of the truth; it will have a good effect, as your neighbors have confidence in you.' " He responded, "I will."

Continuing, she said, "If Mr. Pratt could, for a time, take a position similar to that which Brother Barr has been occupying, it would do him good."

Thus was one cause of our difficulty in organizing removed. Before her testimony was borne, we could not get Mr. Barr to consent to unite with the church; while on the other hand, we found about every one was opposed to receiving Mr. Pratt; still no one felt free to tell why they opposed.

She next addressed a man having a sandy complexion, who sat on one side of the room; and then pointed to a thin-featured woman on the extreme opposite side, addressing them as husband and wife. She delineated some things that transpired in their former lives, before either of them had made any profession of the truth. She said that these things had been magnified by Satan before the mind of the woman until she was driven to insanity.

"I saw," said Mrs. White, "that this woman had been one year in the insane asylum; but since recovering her reason, she has permitted these same jealous feelings to trouble her mind, greatly to the grief of her husband, who has done everything in his power to show his wife that he has been true to her, and that she has no reason to hold him off in the manner she does."

In a moment the wife rushed across the room, and on her knees begged her husband to forgive her. The individuals were almost strangers in that part of the country, and their former history was unknown. Those best acquainted with them, however, were aware that an estrangement existed between them, but the cause they knew not.

After Mrs. White had borne her testimony, the work of organizing the church was soon completed. Mr. Barr came heartily into the organization, while Mr. Pratt was left out. The moment the meeting closed, the latter said, with considerable vehemence, "I tell you what; there is no use trying to go with this people and act the hypocrite; you can't do it."²

1. *Pacific Union Recorder*, February 23, 1911

2. J. N. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress of the Seventh-day Adventists*, General Conference Association of the Seventh-day Adventists, (1892), 248-250

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The People of the Book

HAVING related the events of his early years in the message, the guest speaker paused for a moment, glanced at the congregation over the top of his reading glasses, and somewhat wistfully remarked, "You know, Adventists used to be called the 'people of the Book' back in those days."

Sound familiar? Perhaps you have heard such comments from an older minister, a retired foreign missionary, or a gray-haired patriarch of your local church. Then again, it may be that you remember such things firsthand.

If the accounts are accurate, some time in the past Seventh-day Adventism enjoyed a widespread reputation for being a strongly Bible-based system of belief. And Seventh-day Adventists themselves were known as knowledgeable "authorities" on the Word of God.

A noble heritage, to be sure. And yet, why is it that so often the comments on Adventists being the "people of the Book" are set solidly in the past tense? Why was it so "back in those days," but apparently not so today? Perhaps it is nothing more than society's perception of us that has changed. Yet that is seldom the impression received from those old enough to remember what seem to them to be bygone days.

Surely no Adventist would claim that the Bible is anything other than central to Christianity. Doctrine, faith, duty, practice—all are to be measured and established by the Word. How, then, is it that this general trend of a decreasing familiarity with the Book of all books should have found its way into Adventism?

Many answers might be offered. Busy schedules, television, vocational pressures are all potentially greater diversions than they were fifty and sixty years ago. Some would point to a too-great dependence on the Spirit of Prophecy as causing many to spend less time grappling with the sometimes greater challenges of Biblical study. Others would cite the difficulty of memorizing Scripture caused by the proliferation of new Bible translations. In all probability, each of these causes has to some degree played a part in lessening the perception of Seventh-day Adventists as the "people of the Book."

There is, perhaps, another cause. Less obvious, it may be; but a century ago it was seen as a sufficient threat to the church's well-being that the General Conference, in session, quite unanimously expressed their concern on the subject. Whether this matter is more serious than the influence of television, for instance, could certainly be debated. But in any case, the story

surrounding this action of the General Conference is an interesting one, and deserves a hearing.

The Early Days

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally organized in May 1863. Though we intellectually know better, we sometimes fail to realize just how small and, at times, informal our denomination was in its early days. General Conference sessions of the time were a far cry from the major events we know them to be today. During the years 1863-1881 a total of twenty-five General Conference sessions were held. The average delegate count for these years was twenty-two; once there were only fourteen, and the high was just forty-one.

Scheduling, too, reflected the need for flexibility. Though the first eight years saw a single annual meeting held each spring, the following decade reflected the varying needs of the growing movement. Some years there was no meeting at all; in 1876 the General Conference met three times. Five times in five years "special sessions" were held.'

With a little effort we can easily read between the lines of history and catch a glimpse of the thoughts which must have been going through the minds of those involved in the administration of the church. If the degree of informality displayed in General Conference sessions spilled over into other areas to some extent, we might assume that a certain amount of "disorganization anxiety" was developing.

At the risk of oversimplifying, let us pause a moment to recognize a basic difference which exists from one person to another. Certain individuals value order and predictability more highly than they do flexibility. Others are exactly the opposite.

Both preferences have their advantages and disadvantages. Order and predictability protect a person from unforeseen difficulties, providing assurance and a sense of security. Too much order, however, can produce monumental levels of what we disdainfully speak of as "red tape." Flexibility, on the other hand, allows a person to adapt his responses to the circumstances, respond to change more quickly, and protects against being trapped in a course which is no longer best. Carry flexibility to an extreme, however, and it becomes difficult to distinguish from chaos.

In any working group, such as the developing church of the 1870s, the difficulty is that each individual has a preference of his own, often unlike that of his brethren, in this matter of order versus flexibility.

Seeking the Perfect Balance

By the late 1870s, some (we might assume them to be those who most highly valued order and predictability) began to feel that the affairs of the church were being run too loosely. The avenue of improvement they suggested was the writing of a "manual of directions for the use of young ministers and church officers." As with most suggestions, this one was not acted

upon immediately. Not until December of 1882 did it emerge from the realm of theory and begin to find its place in the realm of reality.

The General Conference that year was held in Rome, New York. Attended by forty-seven delegates, it was the largest yet. It was at this meeting that the suggestion of a church manual came into its own. The story is best told by quoting from the report of the following year's General Conference session:

'At the last annual session of the Conference, it was recommended that a manual of instructions to church officers be prepared, and a committee was appointed to consider the matter and report at this session. W H. Littlejohn, the chairman of the committee, reported at this meeting that the committee had prepared a series of articles, containing instructions to church officers, which have been printed in the *Review* under the title, 'The Church Manual.' It was thought best to print them in the *Review* first, in order to give opportunity for examination and criticism before the matter should come up for final action at this session. After further remarks upon the subject by Elders S. N. Haskell, George I. Butler, H. A. St. John, and Brother W C. White, it was—

"*Voted*, That the Chair appoint a committee of ten to act with the General Conference Committee in the examination and consideration of 'The Church Manual.' This committee was announced as follows: W. C. White, H. Nicola, J. H. Cook, S. H. Lane, O. A. Olsen, M. H. Brown, R. E Andrews, J. B. Goodrich, A. S. Hutchins, H. W. Decker."-

Considering that the General Conference Committee at this time consisted of three members (later in this session it was enlarged to five), we find that thirteen men were appointed to weigh the merits of the proposed manual. Though attendance at the 1883 session had jumped to sixty-five delegates, this still represented a full twenty percent of the Conference. It would appear that the question of the manual was receiving serious consideration.

Three days later (November 12), at the seventh meeting of the conference—
"The committee appointed to consider the matter of the Church Manual, made in substance the following report:

"It is the unanimous judgment of the committee, that it would not be advisable to have a Church Manual. We consider it unnecessary because we have already surmounted the greatest difficulties connected with church organization without one; and perfect harmony exists among us on this subject. It would seem to many like a step toward the formation of a creed, or a discipline, other than the Bible, something we have always been opposed to as a denomination. If we had one, we fear many, especially those commencing to preach, would study it to obtain guidance in religious matters, rather than to seek for it in the Bible, and from the leadings of the Spirit of God, which would tend to their hindrance in genuine religious experience and in knowledge of the mind of the Spirit. It was in taking similar steps that other bodies of Christians first began to lose their simplicity and become formal and spiritually lifeless. Why should we imitate them? The committee feel, in short, that our tendency should be in the direction of simplicity and

close conformity to the Bible, rather than in elaborately defining every point in church management and church ordinances.

"On motion, this report with reference to the church manual was accepted. It was then also—

"*Voted*, That the president of the General Conference be requested to write an article for the *Review*, explaining the action of the Conference on the subject of the manual."³

Report on the Proposed Church Manual

The requested article from the pen of President Butler was to make its appearance in the *Review and Herald* one week after the announcements quoted above. Short and to the point (typical of the plainspoken Butler) the article was entitled, "No Church Manual." It read as follows:

"The writer was requested by the recent General Conference to make a brief statement through the *Review* of the action taken in reference to the proposed church manual. For four or five years past, there has been with some of our brethren a desire to have some manual of directions for the use of young ministers and church officers, etc. It was thought that this would lead to uniformity in all parts of the field, and afford means of instruction to those who were inexperienced, and be very convenient in many respects. Steps were taken several years ago to prepare a manual, but for a time it was left unfinished. Last year, at the Rome Conference, the matter came up for consideration, and three brethren were appointed a committee to prepare a manual, and submit it to the Conference this year for its approval or rejection. During the past summer the matter they have prepared has appeared in the *Review*, and has doubtless been well considered by its readers.

'At the recent Conference a committee of thirteen leading brethren were appointed to consider the whole subject, and report. They did so, and unanimously recommended to the Conference that it was not advisable to have a church manual. Their reasons were briefly given in the report of Conference proceedings given in last week's *Review*. The Conference acted upon this recommendation, and quite unanimously decided against having any manual. In doing so, they did not intend any disrespect to the worthy brethren who had labored diligently to prepare such a work. They had presented much excellent matter, and given many valuable directions concerning church ordinances, holding business meetings, and many other important questions, and had done as well, no doubt, as any others would have done in their place. The reasons underlying this action of the Conference were of a broader character. They relate to the desirability of any manual whatever.

"The Bible contains our creed and discipline. It thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good works. What it has not revealed relative to church organization and management, the duties of officers and ministers, and kindred subjects, should not be strictly defined and drawn out into minute specifications for the sake of uniformity, but rather be left to individual judgment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Had it been best to have a book of

directions of this sort, the Spirit would doubtless have gone further, and left one on record with the stamp of inspiration upon it. Man cannot safely supplement this matter with his weak judgment. All attempts to do it in the past have proved lamentable failures. A variation of circumstances requires variation in action. God requires us to study important principles which He reveals in His Word, but the minutiae in carrying them out He leaves to individual judgment, promising heavenly wisdom in times of need. His ministers are constantly placed where they must feel their helplessness, and their need of seeking God for light, rather than to go to any church manual for specific directions, placed therein by other uninspired men. Minute, specific directions tend to weakness, rather than power. They lead to dependence rather than self-reliance. Better make some mistakes and learn profitable lessons thereby, than to have our way all marked out for us by others, and the judgment have but a small field in which to reason and consider.

"While brethren who have favored a manual have ever contended that such a work was not to be anything like a creed or a discipline, or to have authority to settle disputed points, but was only to be considered as a book containing hints for the help of those of little experience, yet it must be evident that such a work, issued under the auspices of the General Conference, would at once carry with it much weight of authority, and would be consulted by most of our younger ministers. It would gradually shape and mold the whole body; and those who did not follow it would be considered out of harmony with established principles of church order. And, really, is this not the object of the manual? And what would be the use of one if not to accomplish such a result? But would this result, on the whole, be a benefit? Would our ministers be broader, more original, more self-reliant men? Could they be better depended on in great emergencies? Would their spiritual experiences likely be deeper and their judgment more reliable? We think the tendency all the other way.

"The religious movement in which we are engaged has the same influences to meet which all genuine reformations have had to cope with. After reaching a certain magnitude, they have seen the need of uniformity, and to attain to it they have tried to prepare directions to guide the inexperienced. These have grown in number and authority till, accepted by all, they really become authoritative. There seems to be no logical stopping place, when once started upon this road, till this result is reached. Their history is before us; we have no desire to follow it. Hence we stop without a church manual before we get started. Our brethren who have favored such a work, we presume never anticipated such a conclusion as we have indicated. Very likely those in other denominations did not at first. The Conference thought best not to give even the appearance of such a thing.

"Thus far we have got along well with our simple organization without a manual. Union prevails throughout the body. The difficulties before us, so far as organization is concerned, are far less than those we have had in the past. We have preserved simplicity, and have prospered in so doing. It is best to let

well enough alone. For these and other reasons, the church manual was rejected. It is probable it will never be brought forward again."

Butler's closing sentence displays one of the more prominent of human shortcomings—a profound lack of foreknowledge. Forty-nine years later, in 1932, the Seventh-day Adventist Church would indeed have a church manual. Before looking at that portion of our history, however, at least a cursory examination of the suggested manual of 1883 is in order.

The 1883 Text

As noted above, the text for the suggested manual was published during the summer of 1883. Thirteen articles, running in the *Review and Herald* from June 5 to August 28, presented this material to the church at large.

The preface to the manual proper offered a rationale for church organization in general, yet also sought to reassure those who might be skeptical of the wisdom of having such a publication. It was stated: "The directions which it [the manual] contains for the transaction of business matters should not be regarded as invariable under all circumstances, but rather as suggestions simply, which are offered for the assistance of those who feel that they have need of aid, and are not unwilling to accept the counsel of others."⁵

But it is hard to achieve uniformity, order, and predictability by means of counsel alone—especially if that counsel is taken somewhat lightly. How, then, does one impress upon the minds of his more flexible-minded brethren the desirability of following the proposed plan? The authors of the articles sought to accomplish this by means of such statements as:

"The day for the organization [of a local church] having been reached, the following order of business should be carefully carried out:..."⁶ (This was followed by ten detailed items of business.)

"When the hour for the election [of local church officers] has arrived, the following program of business should be carried out:..." (There follows a list of nine items of business, including this interesting suggestion: "8. In case any one person has received a majority of all the votes cast, he is elected, provided the vote was a formal one; but it would be well for the chairman to suggest that some one should move that the election be declared unanimous.") After the list, the authors say: "When all the steps mentioned above have been properly taken, the church will be fully organized."⁷

Bear in mind that the suggested procedures are, on the whole, quite routine. The authors of these articles were not seeking to introduce any new and startling procedures into the church. Quite the opposite—they simply sought to establish and preserve a certain amount of standardization in the commonly accepted procedures of the day.

The scope of the proposed church manual included "such matters as the organizing of churches; the duties of church officers; the admission, transferring, and dropping of members; church trials; and the conducting of quarterly business meetings and the ordinances."⁸

We may well agree with George Butler that "the worthy brethren" who wrote the manual "had presented much excellent matter, and given many valuable directions concerning church ordinances, holding business meetings, and many other important questions, and had done as well, no doubt, as any others would have done in their place."

No, the manual was not voted down because its suggestions were heretical or unorthodox. It was rejected for "reasons...of a broader character" relating more "to the desirability of any manual whatever."

A Change of Opinion (?)

Nearly five decades were to pass before that which George Butler thought would never happen, happened. In 1932 the first official *Church Manual* was issued by the General Conference. An interesting account of how this came about is presented in the preface to the 1986 revision of the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*. Unfortunately, there are some aspects of this account which—by someone unfamiliar with the facts of the 1883 General Conference action—might easily be misunderstood.

For instance, on pages 15 and 16 we find the following two paragraphs:

"The 1882 General Conference session voted to have prepared 'instructions to church officers, to be printed in the *Review and Herald* or in tract form.'—*Review and Herald*, December 26, 1882. This action revealed the growing realization that church order was imperative if church organization was to function effectively, and that uniformity in such order required its guiding principles to be put into printed form. Accordingly the articles were published. But at the 1883 General Conference session, when it was proposed that these articles be placed in permanent form as a church manual, the idea was rejected. The brethren feared that it would possibly formalize the church and take from its ministers their freedom to deal with matters of church order as they might individually desire.

"But this fear—doubtless reflecting the opposition to any kind of church organization that had existed twenty years before—evidently soon departed. The annual General Conference sessions continued to take actions on matters of church order. In other words, they slowly but surely were producing material for a church manual."

It should be noted, first of all, that the idea of turning these "instructions to church officers" into a permanent church manual was not a matter of sudden inspiration at the 1883 General Conference. Thirteen issues of the *Review and Herald* had carried articles entitled "The Church Manual." This was no last-minute surprise.

A second point of possible confusion is the implied link between the opposition to the proposed manual and the opposition to any and all forms of church organization which had existed in the early 1860s. It should be noted that those who reasoned against the need for a church manual were those who were most involved in, and most dedicated to, church organization. Anyone who is at all familiar with the administrative concepts of George I.

Butler would find it quite humorous to think that he was, even subconsciously, opposing church organization.

A third item deserving some thought is the question of whether or not those who "continued to take actions on matters of church order" saw this to be the same as "producing material for a church manual." If we are to give them the benefit of the doubt and assume that they were acting consistently with their own voted intentions, then we must accept that they did not feel that they were engaged in the same process they had so decidedly voted against.

But this third item raises an interesting question: *Is* there any real difference between "taking actions on matters of church order" and writing a church manual?

Actions on Matters of Church Order

It is certainly true that the administrators of the denomination displayed very little hesitation in the passing of resolutions and the framing of rules during the remainder of the 1880s and the whole of the 1890s. Yet, to assume that they saw this in the same light as the writing of a church manual is unwarranted due to the simple lack of evidence. We might well ask, however, whether Ellen White saw this activity in the same light. If she did, then we have a whole new category of information to consider in regard to the wisdom of having a church manual.

Ellen White apparently played no part in the discussion of the advisability of adopting a church manual which took place in 1883. Arthur White, in chapter 19 of *The Lonely Years*, deals with his grandmother's involvement in that General Conference session, but no mention is made of the church manual issue. We find, as well, that in all of the currently released Ellen White material, there is not a single instance of her using the term "church manual."

Her thoughts on the administrative policies of church leaders in the decades following 1883, however, are clearly recorded in language which leaves no room for uncertainty. If we are to equate the actions of the General Conference during those years with the matter of a church manual, as the preface to the 1986 *Church Manual* suggests, then we have great cause for concern. A sampling of her thinking, chronologically arranged, is given below:

(1885) "I have been shown that there is one practice which those in responsible places should avoid; for it is detrimental to the work of God. Men in position should not lord it over God's heritage, and command everything around them. Too many have marked out a prescribed line which they wish others to follow in the work. Workers have tried to do this with blind faith, without exercising their own judgment upon the matter which they had in hand. If those who were placed as directors were not present, they have followed their implicit directions just the same. But in the name of Christ, I would entreat you to stop this work. Give men a chance to exercise their individual judgment. Men who follow the leading of another, and are willing that another should think for them, are unfit to be entrusted with responsibil-

ity. Our leading men are remiss in this matter. God has not given to special ones all the brain power there is in the world....

"I think I have laid out this matter many times before you, but I see no change in your actions."⁹

(1888) "Leave God a chance to do something for those who love Him, and do not impose upon them rules and regulations, which, if followed, will leave them destitute of the grace of God as were the hills of Gilboa, without dew or rain. Your very many resolutions need to be reduced to one third their number, and great care should be taken as to what resolutions are framed."¹⁰

(1892) "The business of our Conference sessions has sometimes been burdened down with propositions and resolutions that were not at all essential, and that would never have been presented if the sons and daughters of God had been walking carefully and prayerfully before Him. The fewer rules and regulations that we can have, the better will be the effect in the end. When they are made, let them be carefully considered, and, if wise, let it be seen that they mean something, and are not to become a dead letter. Do not, however, encumber any branch of the work with unnecessary, burdensome restrictions and inventions of men. In this period of the world's history, with the vast work that is before us, we need to observe the greatest simplicity, and the work will be the stronger for its simplicity.

"Let none entertain the thought, however, that we can dispense with organization.""

(1894) "The lack of confidence which brethren in the ministry repose in their fellow laborers is easily read in the rules and regulations concerning even the details of the work which they seek to impose upon them."²

(1895) "Laws and rules are being made at the centers of the work that will soon be broken into atoms. Men are not to dictate....

"Those who know the truth are to be worked by the Holy Spirit, and not themselves to try to work the Spirit. If the cords are drawn much tighter, if the rules are made much finer, if men continue to bind their fellow laborers closer and closer to the commandments of men, many will be stirred by the Spirit of God to break every shackle, and assert their liberty in Christ Jesus.... No human being shall be permitted to prescribe my liberty or intrench upon the perfect freedom of my brethren, without hearing my voice lifted in protest against it."¹³

(1895) "Those who are enjoined to represent the attributes of the Lord's character, step from the Bible platform, and in their own human judgment devise rules and resolutions to force the will of others. The devisings for forcing men to follow the prescriptions of other men are instituting an order of things that overrides sympathy and tender compassion, that blinds the eyes to mercy, justice, and the love of God. Moral influence and personal responsibility are trodden underfoot.""

(1896) "The effort to earn salvation by one's own works inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing that they fail to keep the law, they will devise rules and regulations of their own to force

themselves to obey. All this turns the mind away from God to self. His love dies out of the heart, and with it perishes love for his fellow men."¹⁵

(1903) "But God has nothing to do with making every institution amenable in some way to the work and workers in Battle Creek. His servants should not be called upon to submit to rules and regulations made there. God's hand must hold every worker, and must guide and control every worker. Men are not to make rules and regulations for their fellow men. The Bible has given the rules and regulations that we are to follow. We are to study the Bible and learn from it the duty of man to his fellow man. 'The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul.' Psalm 19:7."¹⁶

(1907) "The man-ruling power that has been coming into our ranks has no sanction in the Word. Satan has stolen in to lead men to depend on men, and to make flesh their arm. I am instructed to say, Break every yoke that human invention has framed, and heed the voice of Christ, 'rake My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.' Matthew 11:29-30....

"The man who because he is president of a conference dares to take the responsibility of telling his fellow-workers what their duty is, is working out a wrong experience. The influence will be to destroy the God-given personality of men, and place them under human jurisdiction. Such management is laying a foundation for unbelief. The men who instruct their fellow men to look to men for guidance, are really teaching them that when they go to the Lord for counsel and the direction of His Spirit regarding their duty, they must not follow that counsel without first going to certain men to know if this is what they must do. Thus a species of slavery is developed that will bring only weakness and inefficiency to the church of God."¹⁷

(1909) "Do not allow any man to come in as an arbitrary ruler, and say, You must not go here, and you must not go there; you must do this, and you must not do that. We have a great and important work to do, and God would have us take hold of that work intelligently. The placing of men in positions of responsibility in various Conferences, does not make them gods."¹⁸

Those familiar with this unfortunate era of our denomination's history will recognize that the selections above are but a small fraction of the similar statements made by Ellen White during the stressful years before and after the turn of the century. Many more might be provided, but the point is simply this: If the passing of "actions on matters of church order" during these years was in any real way a continuation of the principles behind the rejected church manual of 1883, then we have great cause for thankfulness that the brethren had the foresight to reject it when they did.

It would also be well to notice in particular that Ellen White made a clear distinction between proper organization and excessive organization. The greatest challenge of this aspect of our history is to determine where that dividing line is to be found. Either extreme is disastrous—the balance must be sought.

Recent Developments

Quoting again from the preface to the 1986 edition of the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*:

"Meanwhile the Movement continued to grow rapidly both at home and abroad. It was therefore in the best interests of the very order and proper uniformity that had long been our goal, that the General Conference Committee took action in 1931 to publish a church manual. J. L. McElhany, then vice-president of the General Conference for North America, and later president of the General Conference for fourteen years, was asked to prepare the manuscript. This manuscript was carefully examined by the General Conference Committee and then published in 1932. The opening sentence of the preface of that first edition well observes that 'it has become increasingly evident that a manual on church government is needed to set forth and preserve our denominational practices and polity.' Note the word 'preserve.' Here was no attempt at a late date suddenly to create a whole pattern of church government. Rather, it was an endeavor, first to 'preserve' all the good actions taken through the years, and then to add such regulations as our increasing growth and complexity might require."

Over the years the *Church Manual* has increased somewhat in size as it has been modified and enlarged to address a greater variety of issues and circumstances. Of more importance, however, has been the change in its status. Again, from the 1986 revision:

"Realizing increasingly how important it is that everything 'be done decently and in order' in our worldwide work, and that actions on church government should not only express the mind but have the full authority of the church, the 1946 General Conference session adopted the following procedure:

" All changes or revisions of policy that are to be made in the *Manual* shall be authorized by the General Conference session.'—*General Conference Report*, No. 8, p. 197 (June 14, 1946)....

"The 1946 General Conference session action that all 'changes or revisions of policy' in the *Manual* shall be 'authorized by the General Conference session,' reflects a conception of the authoritative status of General Conference sessions that has long been held among us. In the 1877 session this action was taken:

" *Resolved*, that the highest authority under God among Seventh-day Adventists is found in the will of the body of that people, as expressed in the decisions of the General Conference when acting within its proper jurisdiction; and that such decisions should be submitted to by all without exception, unless they can be shown to conflict with the Word of God and the rights of individual conscience.'—*Review and Herald*, vol. 50, No. 14, p. 106"²⁰

From this statement, it would appear that the present *Church Manual* is not to be considered "as suggestions simply," as was stated of the proposed manual in 1883. Rather, it is to be seen as the authoritative expression of the highest authority under God among Seventh-day Adventists.

Some may, at this point, rise up in horror, condemn the book, and assert that they will never submit to such papal tyranny. Such a reaction, however sincere, is out of place until a workable alternative can be given as to where the line *should* be drawn. We should, after all, endeavor to be logical about the positions we take. And there are several questions yet remaining which are crying out for good answers.

It is interesting to note that the 1877 statement quoted above was framed only six years prior to the voting down of the proposed manual in 1883. In all probability, the great majority of those who passed the one, voted against the other. Can the two actions be harmonized? or are we to assume that the brethren of the time were somewhat fickle in their concerns? And what bearing, if any, does all this have on the status of our current *Church Manual*?

Notice two aspects of the 1877 statement: 1) the authority of the General Conference is specifically limited to a realm described as its "proper jurisdiction," and 2) compliance to the General Conference's decisions is not required when such "can be shown to conflict with the Word of God and the rights of individual conscience."

We readily recognize the second provision as applicable to any effort to coerce church members into sin. That is to say that any General Conference action requiring that which the Lord has forbidden, or forbidding that which He has required, is clearly without authority. To this, all would agree. But what about requiring or forbidding that which the Lord has neither required nor forbidden? Does the church have such a right?

Here we touch on the greater question of the General Conference's (and thus the *Church Manual's*) "proper jurisdiction."

A Question of Authority

Any lawfully appointed representative speaks with the authority given him by the one he represents. In the case of the church this is a matter of great importance, for her lawfully appointed sphere of representation is at the highest level of God's authority—moral standing and salvation. To be a member of the church is but the outward sign of one's having passed from death to life through the grace of Christ.

This places the church in a position unlike that of any other entity, for the church can require nothing of her members except as she does so in the context of individual membership. Thus the church's authority is *always* exercised in terms of a person's moral standing and salvation. The church has no power to impose monetary fines, as does the state, and she is forbidden of God to use physical force, hence she cannot resort to imprisonment or torture as have some churches of the past. Her only means of discipline is the depriving of the privileges of church membership. As a result, the church's enforcement of her requirements always takes the form of a pronouncement concerning the moral standing of the individual involved. And this is as it should be.

True, there are aspects of denominational activity—such as the hiring and firing of personnel—which in many instances can and should be addressed on an entirely different plane. But these are simply the necessarily secular elements of conducting business in this present world. Unless matters of moral standing or salvation are involved, such actions have no bearing whatever on membership.

Within the bounds of moral standing and salvation the church is to speak with all the authority of God. And while the corporate church has been granted the privilege of representing the authority of God, no Seventh-day Adventist would concede that she has been given the prerogative of altering the conditions of salvation. It follows, then, that the conditions of church membership are likewise beyond her power to manipulate.

As surely as we accept the revealed Word of God as the only authoritative statement of the conditions of salvation, so it must be recognized that that Word is the only authoritative statement of the conditions of church membership. To add to this, or to subtract from it can only be done at the risk of compromising the entire basis of the church's lawfully appointed authority. Here, then, in the explicit statements of God's Word, are to be found the boundaries of the General Conference's (and thus the *Church Manual's*) "proper jurisdiction."

We might ask, then, what place does the *Church Manual* have? A look through its pages reveals the presence of many quotations from both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White. All true Seventh-day Adventists will acknowledge these as authoritative sources. That which is required in these writings it is within the proper jurisdiction of the church to enforce.

We will also find in the *Church Manual* a wide variety of suggestions relating to many circumstances which may be expected to arise in the work of the church. The majority of these are simply common sense suggestions of routine ways to deal with such issues. Many of these would be quite workable in most cases. But dare we say *all* cases? Dare we hold these to be requirements, for which the only available penalty for their violation is an unfavorable pronouncement concerning someone's moral standing and hope of salvation? Would we not be much better advised to keep off such holy ground?

The 'Adventist Creed'

Well might we echo the words of George Butler: "The Bible contains our creed and discipline. It thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good works. What it has not revealed relative to church organization and management, the duties of officers and ministers, and kindred subjects, should not be strictly defined and drawn out into minute specifications for the sake of uniformity, but rather be left to individual judgment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Had it been best to have a book of directions of this sort, the Spirit would doubtless have gone further, and left one on record with the stamp of inspiration upon it. Man cannot safely supple-

ment this matter with his weak judgment. All attempts to do it in the past have proved lamentable failures."

In years gone by, Adventists were known as the "people of the Book." In 1883 the General Conference delegates sought to protect that trait, shielding it from what they saw as a dangerous threat. They wrote: "If we had one [a church manual], we fear many, especially those commencing to preach, would study it to obtain guidance in religious matters, rather than to seek for it in the Bible, and from the leadings of the Spirit of God, which would tend to their hindrance in genuine religious experience and in knowledge of the mind of the Spirit."

May it never be said that we as a people have exchanged the high privilege of being the "people of the Book," in order to become nothing more than the "people of the book."

1. See "General Conference Session," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1976), table on 502
2. *Review and Herald*, November 20, 1883, 732
3. *Ibid.*, 733
4. *Ibid.*, November 27, 1883, 745-746
5. *Ibid.*, June 5, 1883, 361
6. *Ibid.*, June 19, 1883, 393
7. *Ibid.*, July 10, 1883, 442
8. "Church Manual," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, (1976), 301
9. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 301-302
10. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 115
11. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, 158
12. *Special Testimonies*, Series A, No. 3, 16
13. *Review and Herald*, July 23, 1895
14. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 363
15. *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 123
16. 1903 *General Conference Bulletin*, 87
17. *Christian Leadership*, The Board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate, (1985), 28
18. *Ellen G. White Amphlets in the Concordance*, vol. 3, 442
19. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (1986 revision), 16
20. *Ibid.*, 16-17

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Mystery of Minneapolis

IN the mid-1880s, two young ministers entered the stream of Adventist history. Alonzo Frevier Jones (38 years old at the time of the Minneapolis Conference) and Ellet Joseph Waggoner (33 years old) were near opposites when they found themselves coeditors of the *Signs of the Times*. Jones was a former soldier from Fort Walla Walla, self-educated and possessed of a photographic memory. Tall and somewhat impulsive, he became one of the most powerful public speakers in the denomination. Waggoner, on the other hand, was shorter, stockier, a product of collegiate schooling with an M.D. from Bellevue Medical College.

In the *Signs*, and in their classes at Healdsburg College, these two young men took exception to certain established Adventist interpretations. Jones found reason to question the inclusion of the Huns as one of the seven horns represented in Daniel 7. Instead, he favored the Alemanni. Waggoner saw the "schoolmaster" law mentioned in Galatians as the moral rather than the ceremonial law.

These matters attracted the attention of two older men, General Conference President George Butler, and General Conference Secretary Uriah Smith. Alarmed that these younger men would take positions opposed to the published views of the church, Elders Butler and Smith worked to counteract their influence. When delegates arrived at the 1886 General Conference session they found that a new book by Elder Butler had just been published. Entitled *The Law in the Book of Galatians: Is It the Moral Law or Does It Refer to That System of Law Peculiarly Jewish?*, the book was an obvious refutation of Waggoner's teaching, though it made no direct reference to him by name.

A nine-member theological committee was appointed to examine the question of the law in Galatians. After hours of discussion, the group split five to four in favor of a motion to censure the *Signs* for publishing Waggoner's views. Reluctant to fuel the controversy by disclosing this close division, Butler settled for a resolution prohibiting the publishing and teaching of "doctrinal views not held by a fair majority of our people" unless they were first "examined and approved by the leading brethren of experience."¹

In Europe at the time, Ellen White was concerned. The 1886 conference had been shown her in "the night season." Writing to Elder Butler she said, "I was shown the attitude of some of the ministers, yourself in particular, at that meeting, and I can say with you, my brother, it was a *terrible* conference."

Her angel guide said, "The Spirit of God has not had a controlling influence in this meeting. The spirit that controlled the Pharisees is coming in among this people."²

Background Issues

Such a strong statement may seem a surprising response to a relatively minor case of administrative tussling. But to see the issue in perspective, one must remember that for nearly twenty years Mrs. White had been shown the deleterious influence of men looking too much to their fellow men for guidance, and—perhaps worse—the tendency for those in positions of responsibility to dictate and control their brethren.

That Elders Butler and Smith were well aware of these warnings, yet did not seem to see their proper application, only made the matter more serious. As early as 1868, Sister White had written of the dangers of church members looking to her and her husband for counsel when they should properly seek wisdom from God. All who relied on others to direct them—"walking by others' light, living on others' experience, feeling as others feel, acting as others act"—would "fail of everlasting life unless they become sensible of their wavering character, and correct it," she warned.³

One of the clearest chapters on this subject in the *Testimonies* was addressed to none other than George Butler. You can find it now under the title of "Leadership" in Volume 3. As recently as October of 1885 she had written him on this topic:

"I think I have laid out this matter many times before you, but I see no change in your actions.... There are men today [who] might be men of breadth of thought, might be wise men, men to be depended upon, who are not such, because they have been educated to follow another man's plan.... Give the Lord a chance to use men's minds. We are losing much by our narrow ideas and plans. Do not stand in the way of the advancement of the work, but let the Lord work by whom He

"This same character of spirit is found here in Europe. For years Elder Andrews held the work back from advancing, because he feared to entrust it to others lest they would not carry out his precise plans. He would never allow anything to come into existence that did not originate with him. Elder Loughborough also held everything in his grasp while he was in California and England, and as a result the work is years behind in England. Elder Wilcox and Sister Thayer have the same spirit of having everything go in the exact way in which they shall dictate, and no one is being trained in such a way as to know how to get hold of the work for himself."⁴

And so it was with some concern that Ellen White followed events in far away Battle Creek as she pursued her busy itinerary in Europe.

Jones and Waggoner Reproved

Three months after the 1886 conference session, on February 10, 1887, Ellet Waggoner prepared a 71-page reply to Elder Butler's book. Entitled *The Gospel*

in the *Book of Galatians: A Review*, the pamphlet remained unpublished for nearly two years. Why the delay? Most likely because of a February 18 letter written by Mrs. White. This letter (largely reprinted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 75-82, and more recently made available in its entirety in *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 21-31) reproved Jones and Waggoner for publicizing differences of belief.

"It is no small thing for you to come out in the *Signs* as you have done, and God has plainly revealed that such things should not be done. We must keep before the world a united front. Satan will triumph to see differences among Seventh-day Adventists. These questions are not vital points."

Such presentations would confuse those who were not well grounded in the truth, and some would make minor differences the "whole burden of the message," and "get up contention and variance." Publishing their views in opposition to their brethren would bring in a state of affairs that they had never dreamed of. The result would be harm, and only harm.

Butler and Smith Reproved

It is understandable that Waggoner had second thoughts about going to press with his review of Butler's booklet after having received this letter. Unfortunately, Elders Butler and Smith—who had received a copy of the letter to Jones and Waggoner—followed a different course. By the fifth of April, Mrs. White felt compelled to write to the leading brethren:

"I have sent copies of letters written to Brethren Waggoner and Jones to Elder Butler in reference to introducing and keeping in the front and making prominent subjects on which there [are] differences of opinions. I sent this, not that you should make them weapons to use against the brethren mentioned, but that the very same cautions and carefulness be exercised by you...."

"I was pained when I saw your article in the *Review*, and for the last half-hour I have been reading the references preceding your pamphlet. Now, my brother, things that you have said many of them are all right. The principles that you refer to are right, but how this can harmonize with your pointed remarks to Dr. Waggoner, I cannot see. I think you are too sharp. And then when this is followed by a pamphlet published of your own views, be assured I cannot feel that you are just right at this point to do this unless you give the same liberty to Dr. Waggoner."

"Had you avoided the question, which you state has been done, it would have been more in accordance with the light God has seen fit to give me...."

"I want to see no pharisaism among us. The matter now has been brought so fully before the people by yourself as well as Dr. Waggoner, that it must be met fairly and squarely in open discussion...."

"You circulated your pamphlet; now it is only fair that Dr. Waggoner should have just as fair a chance as you have had. I think the whole thing is not in God's order. But brethren, we must have no unfairness."⁵

In spite of the interest displayed by many in the law in Galatians, Sister White did not consider it a vital subject. Unfortunately, the controversy had

been raised, and it would mean the loss of souls. But now that it had been brought before the people the issue must be met. To allow the confusion of opposing views would only mean the loss of more souls. The die was cast—Minneapolis loomed on the horizon.

Progress of the Meetings

A seven-day ministerial institute, beginning October 10, 1888, preceded the conference session. During these meetings Elder Jones presented his reasons for preferring the Alemanni over the Huns. He had made a thorough study of the matter, and none could controvert his evidence. Nevertheless many chose to revert to the familiar list given in Elder Smith's *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*. The discussion became more of a debate than a Christian forum, and as a result the conference was polarized. For too many, the question became, not "What is truth?" but "Whom do you support, the established leaders or the mavericks from the West Coast?"

Issues were too easily lost sight of. Too little personal study and prayer, too much blind loyalty among the workers of the cause led Ellen White to remark later that "when Elder Butler was president of the General Conference, ministers placed Elder Butler and Elder Smith and some others where God alone should be. The brethren made grave mistakes, and the Lord sent messages of truth to correct their errors, and to lead them into safe paths. But in spite of the reproofs that have been given to the people, they still make men their trust, and exalt and glorify the human agent, and this grave error is repeated again and again."⁶ Somehow the workers had not been taught to think for themselves.

Sickness detained Elder Butler in Battle Creek. Though his mind and heart were in Minneapolis, he missed both the institute and the General Conference session. Before the meetings began, he dictated a 39-page letter to Ellen White. In this letter—which she spoke of as "a most curious production of accusations and charges against me"—he expressed his concern that she had failed to support him in his dispute with Waggoner. It was the stress brought on by her course, he said, which had largely contributed to his five-month-long illness.

Four days into the institute Sister White wrote him, commenting on events of the past as well as giving news of the meetings:

"The spirit which has prevailed at this meeting is not of Christ. There is not love, there is not sympathy or tender compassion one toward another. Dark suspicions have been suggested by Satan to cause dissension. There must be no strife between brethren. God has made this people the repository of sacred truths. Ye are one in faith, one in Christ Jesus. Let there be no lording it over God's heritage. Let there be no such oppression of conscience as is revealed in these meetings....

"I wrote [previously] in the anguish of my soul in regard to the course you pursued in the General Conference two years since. The Lord was not pleased with that meeting. Your spirit, my brother, was not right. The manner in

which you treated the case of Dr. Waggoner was perhaps after your own order, but not after God's order....

"You refer to your office as president of the General Conference, as if this justified your course of action, which you deemed wholly right, but which, from the light the Lord has been pleased to give me, I deem to be wrong in some respects. The very fact that you are standing in a position of responsibility I urge upon you as the reason why you should show a forbearing, courteous, Christlike spirit at all times.... Your brethren in the ministry who respect you and your office, will be very apt to follow your example in the treatment of such cases....

"You call Brethren Jones and Waggoner fledglings, and you make reference to the words I spoke at the conference in California. I am surprised, my brother, to read such things from your pen."⁷

Monday, October 15, E. J. Waggoner introduced the subject of the law in Galatians. It was expected that the matter would be handled as a debate, Elder J. H. Morrison having been selected to defend the traditional position. Waggoner, however, had other plans, and refused to sign the formal statement of resolve which had been prepared for him. He preferred to have a Bible study.

Ellen White listened with interest, for she had never before heard Dr. Waggoner's views. She remarked several times during the conference that she differed with him on some points, but said, "I believe him to be perfectly honest in his views, and I would respect his feelings and treat him as a Christian gentleman.... I see the beauty of truth in the presentation of the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law as the doctor has placed it before us."⁸

Efforts to Limit Discussion

Elder Butler, of course, was kept informed of developments. Unable to advocate his views in person, he sent telegrams to Elders Morrison and Kilgore urging them to "stand by the old landmarks." Alarmed by the turn events were taking in the meetings, Elder Kilgore—a member of the General Conference committee and a strong Butler supporter—stood to his feet and moved that the discussion of "righteousness by faith" be closed until Elder Butler was able to participate. Ellen White was seated on the platform at the time. Rising to her feet she said, "This is the Lord's work. Does He want His work to wait for Elder Butler? The Lord wants His work to go forward and not wait for any man." There was no reply; the studies continued.

In her morning talk to the delegates the next day she spoke of the matter again: "Had Brother Kilgore been walking closely with God he never would have walked onto the ground as he did yesterday and made the statement he did in regard to the investigation that is going on. That is, they must not bring in any new light or present any new argument...because one man is not here....

"I never was more alarmed than at the present time.... I want to tell you, my brethren, that it is not right to fasten ourselves upon the ideas of any one man....

"I tell you in the fear of God, 'Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.' [Isaiah 2:22] How can you listen to all that I have been telling you all through these meetings and not know for yourself what is truth?..."

"Let us come to God as reasonable beings to know for ourselves what is truth. But if you want to take a position that only one man can explain the truth, I want to tell you that this is not as God would have it. Now, I want harmony. The truth is a unit. But if we fasten to any man we are not taking the position that God would have us take...."

"If the ministers will not receive the light, I want to give the people a chance; perhaps they may receive it. God did not raise me up to come across the plains to speak to you and you sit here to question His message and question whether Sister White is the same as she used to be in years gone by. I have in many things gone way back and given you that which was given me in years past, because then you acknowledged that Sister White was right. But somehow it has changed now, and Sister White is different...."

"I speak decidedly because I want you to realize where you are standing. I want our young men to take a position, not because someone else takes it, but because they understand the truth for themselves."

"Elder Kilgore, I was grieved more than I can express to you when I heard you make that remark, because I have lost confidence in you. Now, we want to get right at what God says.... Let us go to the Lord for the truth instead of our showing this spirit of combativeness. God has given me light, and you have acknowledged it in times past."⁹

The normal responsibilities of the conference were not completely lost sight of in all this. A great deal of regular business was attended to, including the election of new officers. Elder Butler resigned his position on account of sickness. While Ellen White sympathized with her old friend in his affliction, she confided to a family member that he had already been in office three years too long and had come to think of himself as virtually infallible.¹⁰

Aftermath of the Session

On November 4 the conference closed. In a letter written that day, Sister White characterized the experience as "the hardest and most incomprehensible tug of war we have ever had among us as a people." Still, she believed that the meeting would "result in great good."¹¹

One of the most frustrating features of the 1888 conference is that no clear record was kept of what Elder Waggoner presented.¹² That it touched on the law—and the gospel—in Galatians is obvious. It was this issue that created the great animosity to his message. His opponents became so preoccupied with this point that they missed what Ellen White saw—the matchless charms of Christ.

What thrilled her heart at Minneapolis? The law in Galatians? No, certainly not. Not until 1896 was she to be shown that Galatians 3:24 referred especially to the moral law. Before then she would say, 'As to the law in Galatians, I have no burden and never have had.'¹³

The cause for her enthusiasm is simple. So simple, yet so profound, that many overlooked it. And many still underestimate it. The cause for her enthusiasm was Jesus Christ—the source of all power, the healing of all ills, the knowledge of all things, the remedy for all sin. Not a Christ held separate from the life, but Christ our Saviour dwelling in our hearts and filling us with all the fullness of God. Somehow, somewhere along the way, it seems we had lost touch with Jesus.

"Now, it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants [Elders Jones and Waggoner] a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines."¹⁴

The reception given this "most precious message" was, of course, mixed. Jones described it in 1893: "I know that some there [Minneapolis] accepted it; others rejected it entirely. You know the same thing. Others tried to stand halfway between, and get it that way; but that is not the way it is to be had, brethren; that is not the way it is received. They thought to take a middle course, and although they did not exactly receive it, or exactly commit themselves to it, yet they were willing to go whichever way the tide turned at the last...."

"Brethren, you need to get that righteousness of Jesus Christ nearer to your heart than that. Every man needs to get the righteousness of God nearer to him than simply weighing up things and compromising between parties, or he will never see or know the righteousness of God at all."¹⁵

"The Loud Cry of the Third Angel"

The greatest opposition came from Battle Creek. True to her promise, Ellen White gave the people "a chance," traveling extensively for most of the next year, often in company with one or both of the "fledglings." Perhaps the greatest boost to the message came in 1892 after she had been removed from the scenes of these labors. Writing from Australia, she revealed that the "loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ."¹⁶

This positive identification has fixed the importance of 1888 firmly in Adventist thought. Yet we are forced to conclude that nothing, as yet, has fixed the reality of the message in our hearts. The loud cry has not sounded, the latter rain has not fallen, our Lord has not come. He has not been slack in His promise, but we have never looked to Him for the fullness of blessing which He has to offer.

Has our view of Jesus been "eclipsed"? To whom do we look for counsel, for wisdom, for encouragement? To man—or to the Son of man? Do we flatter ourselves that numbers will make a difference? That committees or bylaws are sufficient authority to contradict God's Word? Such conclusions are "worthy of no more consideration than are any man's expressions. Christ says, 'With-

out me ye can do nothing.' [John 15:5] If He is not honored in your assemblies as chief counselor, your planning comes from no higher source than the human mind."¹⁷

Our history—and that of ancient Israel—speaks eloquently, urging that we learn both the theological truths and the practical lessons of righteousness by faith. "Depending upon men has been the great weakness of the church. Men have dishonored God by failing to appreciate His sufficiency, by coveting the influence of men. Thus Israel became weak. The people wanted to be like the other nations of the world, and they asked for a king. They desired to be guided by human power which they could see, rather than by the divine, invisible power that till then had led and guided them, and had given them victory in battle. They made their own choice, and the result was seen in the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the nation."¹⁸

Yet there is ample cause for hope and rejoicing in the contemplation of Christ's righteousness. As we turn our eyes—and the eyes of those who might mistakenly look to us—away from man and fix them upon our Lord, we will find that the "matchless charms of Christ" are as powerful today as a century ago.

1. See Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Rugged Heart: The Story of George I. Butler*, Southern Publishing Association, (1979), 84-85
2. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 92-93; *Ibid.*, 165 (MS 15, 1888)
3. *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek*, (1868), 19-20; now in *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 130
4. *The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters*, 382, 384. Note that date is inaccurate; for correct date, see D. A. Delafield, *Ellen G. White In Europe*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, (1975), 13
5. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 32, 33-35
6. *Ibid.*, 1245
7. *Ibid.*, 94, 96-97, 99
8. *Ibid.*, 164
9. *Ibid.*, 151, 153
10. *Ibid.*, 183
11. *Ibid.*, 182
12. The best reconstruction of Waggoner's message is that prepared by Clinton Wahlen. A condensation of his Master's thesis was printed in the Winter, 1988, issue of *Adventist Heritage*.
13. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1574-1575; *Ibid.*, 604
14. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 93
15. 1893 *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, 185
16. *Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892
17. *The Thulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters*, 351
18. *The Kress Collection*, 57

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Alonzo Trevier Jones on Minneapolis

Though the Minneapolis conference produced more than its share of confusion, one point is clear. The loud cry of the third angel had begun. A century later, we are confronted with the obvious question, What happened? Some would say that the issue is only made so decisive by the imaginations of those who look back at the event with imperfect vision and an exaggerated understanding of the circumstances. History disagrees. Addressing the delegates of the 1893 General Conference, A. T Jones spoke frankly of the cost of Minneapolis.

NOW we have a few minutes to talk upon how we got into this position, how these dangers came upon us.

You remember the other evening when I was reading that second chapter of Joel, that one of the brethren, when I had read that twenty-third verse, Brother Corliss called attention to the margin. Do you remember that? And I said we would have use for the margin at another time. Now all of you turn and read that margin.

The twenty-third verse says: "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you *the former rain* moderately." What is the margin? 'A teacher of righteousness." He hath given you "a teacher of righteousness." How? 'According to righteousness."

'And he will cause to come down for you the rain"; then what will that be? When He gave the former rain, what was it? "A teacher of

righteousness." And when He gives that latter rain what will it be? 'A teacher of righteousness." How? 'According to righteousness."

Then is not that just what the Testimony has told us in that article that has been read to you several times? "The loud cry of the third angel," the latter rain, has already begun, "in the message of the righteousness of Christ." Is not that what Joel told us long ago? Has not our eye been held that we did not see? Did not we need the anointing? Brethren, what in the world do we need so much as that? How glad we ought to be that God sends His own Spirit in the prophets to show us when we do not see! How infinitely glad we ought to be for that!

Well, then, the latter rain—the loud cry—according to the Testimony, and according to the Scripture, is "the teaching of righteousness," and "according to righteousness," too.

Now brethren, when did that message of the righteousness of Christ begin with us as a people? [One or two in the audience: "Three or four years ago."] Which was it, three? or four? [Congregation: "Four."] Yes, four. *Where* was it? [Congregation: "Minneapolis.""] What then did the brethren reject at Minneapolis? [Some in the congregation: "The loud cry."] What is that message of righteousness? The Testimony has told us what it is; the loud cry—the latter rain. Then what did the brethren, in that fearful position in which they stood, reject at Minneapolis? They rejected the latter rain—the loud cry of the third angel's message.

Brethren, isn't it too bad? Of course the brethren did not know they were doing this, but the Spirit of the Lord was there to tell them they were doing it, was it not? But when they were rejecting the loud cry, "a teacher of righteousness," and then the Spirit of the Lord, by His prophet, stood there and told them what they were doing—what then? Oh, then they simply set this prophet aside with all the rest. That was the next thing. Brethren, it is time to think of these things. It is time to think soberly, to think carefully.

On page 8 of *Danger in Adopting Worldly Policy in the Work of God*, I read the following:

'As man's Intercessor and Advocate, Jesus will lead all who are willing to be led, saying, 'Follow Me

upward, step by step, *where the clear light of the Sun of Righteousness shines.*' But not all are following the light. Some are moving away from the safe path, which at every step is a path of humility. God has committed to His servants a message for this time; but this message does not in every particular coincide with the ideas of all the leading men, and some criticize the message and the messengers. *They dare even reject the words of reproof sent to them from God through His Holy Spirit.*"

You know who it was. I do not mean for you to look to somebody else. You know whether you yourself were at it, or not. And, brethren, the time has come to take up tonight what we there rejected. Not a soul of us has ever been able to dream yet the wonderful blessing that God had for us at Minneapolis, and which we would have been enjoying these four years, if hearts had been ready to receive the message which God sent. We would have been four years ahead, we would have been in the midst of the wonders of the loud cry itself, tonight. Well, brethren, you know. Each one for himself—we are not to begin to examine one another, let us examine ourselves. Each one for himself knows what part he had in that thing; and the time has come to root up the whole business. Brethren, the time has come to root up the whole thing.

1893 *General Conference Bulletin*, 183

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Arthur Grosvenor Daniells on Minneapolis

A. G. Daniells was not a delegate to the General Conference session of 1888. He was pioneering the mission work of the church in New Zealand at the time. Yet he no doubt heard at least some of the rumblings which rocked the church as a result of that session. During the 1890s he worked closely with E. G. White and her son William White. Following his return to America in 1900 he had opportunity to become acquainted with both A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. Still, years later, he would express himself that the real potential of the message of Righteousness by Faith had been missed.

IN 1888 there came to the Seventh-day Adventist Church a very definite awakening message. It was designated at the time as "the message of Righteousness by Faith."

Both the message itself and the manner of its coming made a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of ministers and people, and the lapse of time has not erased that impression from memory. To this day, many of those who heard the message when it came are deeply interested in it and concerned regarding it. All these long years they have held a firm conviction, and cherished a fond hope, that someday this message would be given great prominence among us, and that it would do the cleansing, regenerating work in the church which they believed it was sent by the Lord to accomplish.

Among the influences which have led to this conviction is the divine witness borne to the proclamation of

the message of Righteousness by Faith as it was set forth at the time of the General Conference held in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the year 1888. From the very first, the Spirit of Prophecy placed the seal of approval upon the message and its presentation at that time. In the plainest and most positive language we were told that the Lord was leading and impelling men to proclaim this definite message of Righteousness by Faith. Of that epochal Conference, and the men who gave the specific message, it is declared:

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people.... This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience

to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 91-92

Every sentence in this comprehensive statement is worthy of most careful study. Let us briefly analyze it:

1. *A Most Precious Message*—"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people."

2. *The Object*—"This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world."

3. *The Scope*—(a) "It presented justification through faith in the Surety." (b) "It invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God."

4. *The Need*—(a) "Many had lost sight of Jesus." (b) "They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family."

5. *The Resources*—(a) "All power is given into His hands," (b) "that He may dispense rich gifts unto men," (c) "imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent."

6. *Extent*—"This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world."

7. *What It Really Is*—"It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure."

It is difficult to conceive how there could be any misunderstanding or uncertainty regarding the heavenly endorsement of this message. It clearly stated that the Lord sent the message, and that He led the minds of the men who were so deeply engrossed by it and who proclaimed it with such earnestness.

It should be borne in mind at this time that the course taken by the messengers in subsequent years has nothing to do with the positive statement, oft repeated, that they were led by the Lord to declare this fundamental truth of the gospel to His people at that particular time....

It is evident that the application of this message was not limited to the time of the Minneapolis Conference, but that its application extends to the close of time; and consequently it is of greater significance to the church at the present time than it could have been in 1888. The nearer we approach the great day of God, the more imperative will be the need of the soul-cleansing work which that message was sent to do. Surely we have every reason for a new, more wholehearted study and proclamation of that message.

A. G. Daniells, *Christ Our Righteousness*, 23-26

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Peril of Power

IN the age of nuclear energy and its attendant hazards, it takes very little reflection to realize that power, in and of itself, cannot be considered invariably beneficial. We recognize this fact in our day-to-day familiarity with electricity. Few of us would want to do without it, but we know as well that we must be guarded lest we feel its wrath when we violate the rules of safety.

The industrialized age, with its extensive use of mechanical, electrical, solar, chemical, and nuclear power abounds with such illustrations. But the general principle is not new. The peril of power goes all the way back to the inception of sin, for—above and beyond all other forms—spiritual power is pre-eminent. Yet, though the principle is older than mankind, perhaps the clearest inspired commentary on it is of quite recent origin. And it would be well for us to examine the evidence and instruction left on record to guide us in the proper uses of power. The lessons are well worth learning. They are, in fact, essential.

In no other context did Ellen White deal so fully with the question of power and authority in the church as she did in the context of the 1888 General Conference session and its dreary aftermath. For more than a decade, circumstances forced the subject into her thoughts time and again as she penned letter after letter to her brethren at Battle Creek. The church she loved was suffering from misguided management; she could not refrain from speaking out.

As so often happens, the problem did not make its first appearance in full bloom. Developed over several years, it crept into the church, point by point persuading men to accept as proper that which could only work their ruin. And though it was certainly never his intention, it began very largely with the mistaken ideas of one man. "I cannot be pleased with your spirit, Brother Butler; it is not Christlike.... Sometimes your spirit has been softened and melted with tenderness, but false ideas of what belonged to your position in the work have turned your mind into wrong channels."

Thrust into the leadership vacuum created by James White's retirement and early death, George Butler did his best to serve his Master. Perplexing questions arose on every side as the work rapidly expanded. Someone had to answer them, and his brethren seemed willing that he should do so (after all, you don't get in trouble following directions from the top). But too many overlooked the fact that though Elder Butler was General Conference president, he wasn't "the top." And he himself failed to see that his brethren

needed the experience of seeking wisdom from the Lord for themselves. The result followed on the heels of the cause.

Though with the advantage of hindsight you may see the error of Elder Butler's course, be charitable in your evaluation of the man. The Lord saw the same error, infinitely more clearly, and yet He continued to plead with His servant until—years later—Ellen White could say of him, "I see in Elder Butler one who has humbled his soul before God. He has another spirit than the Elder Butler of younger years. He has been learning his lesson at the feet of Jesus."² We have no interest to condemn any man, but we must learn the lessons of past experience.

Notice again how Ellen White attributes the development of wrong practices, not to devious design, but to a lack of clear thought and to false premises.

Men in responsible positions "tried to take all branches of the work upon themselves, fearing others would not prove as efficient. Their wills have therefore controlled in everything.... The work has been bound about, not from design, but from not discerning the necessity of a different order of things to meet the demands for the time. This is largely due to the feeling of Elder Butler that position gave unlimited authority. Greater responsibilities were pressed upon him and accepted than one person could carry; and the consequence was the demoralized condition of affairs, notwithstanding he may have done the very best he himself could do under the circumstances."³

And so it was that a twofold error—on the part of leadership and workers alike—led to a "demoralized condition" within the church. Something must be done. We might have chosen lightning from heaven, or perhaps the sudden removal by way of a heart attack of the one deemed to be the problem. God saw fit to do something different.

The Lord's Response

"Now, it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus, and lead men to look to man, and to trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message in clear, distinct lines."⁴

We have too often thought of righteousness by faith as some sort of abstract, intangible piece of "theology." Without denying that theology is involved, please note that the message of A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner was given for a specific purpose, to counteract a specific problem. Time after time this link is made in Ellen White's letters.

"God designs that men shall use their minds and consciences for themselves. He never designed that one man should become the shadow of another, and utter only another's sentiments. But this error has been coming in among us, that a very few are to be mind, conscience, and judgment for all God's workers. The foundation of Christianity is 'Christ our Righteousness.' Men are individually responsible to God and must act as God acts upon them,

not as another human mind acts upon their mind; for if this method of indirect influence is kept up, souls cannot be impressed and directed by the great I AM. They will, on the other hand, have their experience blended with another, and will be kept under a moral restraint, which allows no freedom of action or of choice."⁵

There were two significant defects in all of this. The first is the obvious loss of active, soul-saving labor from those who may be overlooked or unappreciated.

"Men will never develop wisdom in management, either in business matters or in spiritual things, if they are educated to depend upon other men's brains to think and plan for them."⁶

"The Lord has presented before me that men in responsible positions are standing directly in the way of the workings of God upon His people, because they think that the work must be done and the blessing must come in a certain way they have marked out, and they will not recognize that which comes in any other way....

"God has appointed channels of light, but these are not necessarily through the minds of any particular man or set of men. When all shall take their appointed places in God's work, and not allow others to mold them at will, then one great advance will have been made toward letting the light shine upon the world."⁷

The second problem, and one that is often ignored, is the effect such a system has on those doing the directing.

"Elder Butler thought that everybody must yield to him. He came to think that he must command everything. This destroyed his brain power. He was only a finite instrument. He could not impart what he had not received."

"Men have placed [Elder Butler] where God should be placed, and by so doing, have ruined their own religious experience and have also ruined Elder Butler, and the church was becoming strengthless, Christless, because they glorified men when every jot of glory should be given to God."

A Wealth of Counsel

This problem was of such magnitude a century ago that the prophet of God wrote page after page of counsel. Space permits the inclusion of no more than a fraction of this material, but all who have access to the *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials* are encouraged to read in context the references listed at the end of this chapter. For those not having these books, we give here a small selection of the most pertinent references.

"God's servants are not to be treated as the servants of the Conference, to be bound and released at their pleasure."¹⁰

"Leave God a chance to do something for those who love Him, and do not impose upon them rules and regulations, which, if followed, will leave them destitute of the grace of God as were the hills of Gilboa, without dew or rain. Your very many resolutions need to be reduced to one third their number, and great care should be taken as to what resolutions are framed."¹¹

"Let no man stand between your soul and Jesus Christ, thinking that the Lord tells him that which He refuses to tell you. Give God a chance, ministering brethren, to operate on your mind. Place yourself before Him as one who wants to learn of Him.... He does not design that you shall be dependent on human minds. He would have you look to Him in faith to do large things for you, not through another man, but to you."¹²

"When men lean no longer on men or on their own judgment, but make God their trust, it will be made manifest in every instance by meekness of spirit, by less talking and much more praying, by the exercise of caution in their plans and movements. Such men will reveal the fact that their dependence is in God, that they have the mind of Christ."¹³

"Satan's methods tend to one end, to make men the slaves of men. When this is done, confusion and distrust, jealousies and evil surmisings, are the result."¹⁴

"The time will come when it will be the duty of Christ's ambassadors to declare God's will in plain terms, to let men know that they are God's workmen to be led and taught of God, and that they must carry out their elevated mission as He shall dictate. Religious liberty means more to us as a people than many take it to mean."¹⁵

"There are men holding responsible positions, and many think that they would prove traitors to the cause and work of God, should they intimate that these men were in the wrong."¹⁶

"The great sin which has been entering the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists is the sin of exalting man, and placing him where God should be. This was demonstrated at Minneapolis."¹⁷

"Men in responsible positions have manifested the very attributes that Satan has revealed. They have sought to rule minds, to bring their reason and their talents under human jurisdiction. There has been an effort to bring God's servants under the control of men who have not the knowledge and wisdom of God, or an experience under the Holy Spirit's guidance. Principles have been born that should never have seen the light of day. The illegitimate child should have been stifled as soon as it breathed the first breath of life."¹⁸

"The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences. If a man is sanguine of his own powers, and seeks to exercise dominion over his brethren, feeling that he is invested with authority to make his will the ruling power, the best and only safe course is to remove him, lest great harm be done, and he lose his own soul, and imperil the souls of others.... This disposition to lord it over God's heritage will cause a reaction unless these men change their course."¹⁹

What about the Laity?

The counsels just quoted, indeed the majority of Ellen White's comments on such subjects, were made in the context of letters and manuscripts addressed to the men "at the head of the work." Did she have no advice or word of counsel to the men and women "in the pew"? Yes, she did, but a little reflection will make clear the dilemma that confronted her

There are always those who will take any issue to unwarranted extremes. How was she to preserve—as much as possible—the desirable union of church members while making plain the dangers which faced God's people? Naturally, many of her more public counsels were more cautious, less pointed than what she might write to men in leadership. But only up to a point. By 1894 it would seem that Ellen White believed it was necessary to speak very clearly, and directly to the people. The most marked example is a two-part article which appeared for all to read in the pages of the *Review and Herald*. Printed in the issues of August seven and fourteen, it bore the title "Look to God for Wisdom." Brief excerpts are given here:

"The people of God have educated themselves in such a way that they have come to look to those in positions of trust as guardians of truth, and have placed men where God should be. When perplexities have come upon them, instead of seeking God, they have gone to human sources for help, and have received only such help as man can give.... God removes his wisdom from men who are looked up to as God. Those who occupy positions of trust are greatly injured when they are tempted by their brethren to think that they must always be consulted by the workers, and that the people should bring to them their difficulties and trials. It is a mistake to make men believe that the workers for Christ should make no move save that which has first been brought before some responsible man....

"Though at first the brother may be reluctant to take so great a responsibility as that of being a counselor [in the improper sense here discussed] to his brethren, if he does do it, he will finally encourage the very dependence that he once lamented, and he will come to feel grieved if matters are not brought to his attention. He will want to understand the reason for movements made in the cause that have no connection with his branch of the work....

"It may be argued that the Lord gives special wisdom to those to whom He has intrusted grave responsibilities. The Lord does give special wisdom to him who has sacred trusts. If the human agent, moment by moment, makes God his only helper, and walks humbly with Him, God will then give light and knowledge and wisdom, in order that His human agent may be able to guide his brethren who would look to him for counsel as to their duty. In a clear and forcible manner he will point them to a Source that is untainted and pure from the defects and errors that are so apparent in humanity. He may, for it is his privilege, refuse to be brains and conscience for his brethren....

"If [a leader] is continually appealed to for advice, he is in danger of thinking that he cannot err, and that he is capable of judging the cases of his brethren, and in this way he brings peril upon the church. Spirituality will wane under an influence of this kind, and the knowledge of God's will, will become more and more indistinct, while the sayings of men become of more and more importance in the eyes of the people.... God is not exalted, but is put in the shade by human inventions and by those who may be so deceived as to think that they are doing God service.

"The education that should be given to all is that they should exercise faith, that they should go to God in earnest prayer, and learn to think for themselves. To meet difficulties and plow through them by the help of God is a lesson of the highest value...."

"Let us, then, remember that our weakness and inefficiency are largely the result of looking to man, of trusting in man to do those things for us that God has promised to do for those who come unto him."

The Role of Leadership

Clearly, cultivating a dependence upon men is far outside the boundaries of Christianity. Yet these counsels raise questions as well. What *is* the place of leadership? Are leaders to be passive, exerting no strong influence on the work?

Certainly not! The appointed leaders of God's church are placed under sacred trust to advance and to protect the work of the Lord. The problem comes only when responsible men, as men did a century ago, cling to false ideas of what belongs to their position.

"There are men whose character and life testify to the fact that they are false prophets and deceivers. These we are not to hear or tolerate. But those whom God is using are under His control, and He has not appointed men with human, shortsighted judgment to criticize and condemn, to pass judgment and reject their work, because every idea does not coincide with that which they suppose to be truth."²⁰

"There is need of an education in regard to the rights and duties of men in authority who have lorded it over God's heritage. When a man is placed in a position of trust, who knows not what kind of spirit he should exercise in dealing with human minds, he needs to learn the very first principles as to his authority over his fellow men. Right principles must be brought into the heart, and wrought into the warp and woof of character."²¹

What are these "first principles" which need to be mastered? Surely there must be some guidelines! Indeed, there are.

"The effort to manage others, which is made by those who cannot manage themselves, is one of the greatest fallacies that could exist. Let those who love to rule begin the work where it should have begun years ago; let them rule themselves, and show that they are in subordination to God's rule, that they have been converted at heart. Then they will at least not make their fellow men groan under the galling yoke of their restrictive policy. Then there will be fewer prayers sent up to Heaven in anguish of heart because of their selfish oppression."²²

That is the answer. "Show that they are in subordination to God's rule." When a man does that, his leadership problems are largely solved. His service will be valued for all it is worth by those who have the same goal of loyal service to God. The confusion which surrounds so many would-be leaders will vanish. True, such a man may lose the support of the halfhearted and unconverted, but since when was that a detriment to anyone wholly dedicated to God's work?

Leaders are to be strong, to speak decidedly, to stand for the clearly revealed truths of God's Word. They are not to attempt to produce an outward conformity of action by controlling the convictions, consciences, and minds of their brethren, but to fearlessly declare the truth, and let God's Word and Spirit carry the battle. Again, from a century ago we find the illustration.

"From the beginning of his work as president of the General Conference, Elder Olsen's policy has been a mistake. Instead of upholding that which he knew to be according to the law of God, instead of standing firmly as a faithful guardian for those holy trusts which would keep the great heart of the work pure, at any apparent expense or financial loss, he has tried to occupy a position on both sides."²³

Leadership is no easy task. Well has the Lord advised us to pray for those who bear important responsibilities in His work. Beset by temptations on every side, they need the heartfelt prayers and support of all God's people. The devil will do all in his power to support them in apostasy; shouldn't the church stand intelligently and wholeheartedly to support them in doing right?

1. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 89
2. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 85
3. *Ibid.*, 110-111
4. *Ibid.*, 1338; also in *Testimonies to Ministers*, 93
5. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 112
6. *Ibid.*, 1613
7. *Ibid.*, 113
8. *Battle Creek Letters*, 35
9. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 966
10. *Ibid.*, 1402
11. *Ibid.*, 115
12. *Ibid.*, 836
13. *Ibid.*, 953
14. *Ibid.*, 1435
15. *Ibid.*, 1372
16. *Ibid.*, 1370
17. *Ibid.*, 1619
18. *Ibid.*, 1525-1526
19. *Ibid.*, 1445
20. *Ibid.*, 1604
21. *Ibid.*, 1528
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, 1578

Those interested in further study of this topic will find a wealth of information contained in the *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*. The following pages, with their surrounding context, are especially pertinent: 38, 89-90, 93, 98, 103, 108, 110-115, 183, 200, 541, 547, 834-836, 923-928, 951-953, 966, 975, 1014, 1092, 1128, 1235-1236, 1245, 1260-1263, 1269, 1313, 1320, 1338 1357-1359, 1369-1372, 1400-1402, 1427, 1434-1437, 1443-1445, 1459, 1476, 1525-1528, 1541, 1553, 1558-1559, 1567-1568, 1578, 1589, 1592-1599, 1604-1605, 1610-1613, 1619, 1622-1624, 1633, 1639, 1663, 1701, 1727-1747, 1790.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Ellen G. White on Pluralism

What are Christians to do when unity seems unattainable? Sometimes a person must strike out on his own, as it were, in order to preserve a clear conscience (Ellen White, for example, when she took the message of Righteousness by Faith "to the people"). But there are times when silence is best. The following selection describes one such occasion.

THIS afternoon I had a long conversation with Brother Foster, a member of the Prahran Church, who is in perplexity and trial. He is a tailor by trade, and is a first-class workman. Before accepting the truth he had a position that commanded \$30 a week. When he began to keep the Sabbath, he was permitted to retain his position, losing only the day's wages for the Sabbath. He is a man of good address, and has good ability to teach the truth. He left his position, and went into the field as a laborer, but was sent alone into a hard field, and became discouraged and confused, and almost fell under the delusive power of Satan. At the conference one year ago he had a conversation with me. He became free, the meeting did him good. He has since moved to Melbourne, and works at his trade and leads the meetings in Prahran. But in the present depression of business, he is in close circumstances; and being in poor health, with a large family, he has become much discouraged, and in this state of mind Satan has pressed temptation and darkness

upon him. For weeks he has been in sore trial, and today he came to tell me his troubles.

He says he knew so little of the Testimonies, he did not understand the relation they sustained to the cause. Some time since, while he was in perplexity, asking the Lord for light, he had a very striking dream. He saw Sister White in a boat riding on the billows, which were sending the spray like light in every direction. It came into the room where he was with many others; he moved to get beyond its reach, when a hand stretched out to him gave him a paper. The paper was on fire, and a voice said, "Read quickly." He put out the fire, and opened the paper. There was a Testimony, and a key lying upon the Testimony. The interpretation came to his mind with great force, "The key to the Testimonies is the Testimonies themselves." He woke with the blessing of God upon him. Then he prayed, "Lord, direct me to the Testimony I should read to help my case." He took up Testimony thirty-one and opened at the article, "The Testimonies Rejected." He read

it through with intense interest and was deeply impressed that the Testimonies were from God.

After this he saw in the *Review* the article of Brother A. T. Jones in regard to the image of the beast, and then the one from Elder Smith presenting the opposite view. He was perplexed and troubled. He had received much light and comfort in reading articles from Brethren Jones and Waggoner; but here was one of the old laborers, one who had written many of our standard books, and whom we had believed to be taught of God, who seemed to be in conflict with Brother Jones. What could all this mean? Was Brother Jones in the wrong? Was Brother Smith in error? Which was right? He became confused. When the important laborers in the cause of God take opposite positions in the same paper, whom can we depend upon? Who can we believe has the true position?

Brother Foster was in such perplexity that he sent word by letter that he could not lead in the meetings. Since the beginning of the week of prayer, temptations have pressed so strongly upon him that he has received no benefit. These differences among our leading men have absorbed all his thoughts and he is much distressed over the matter. I told him I expected that others who should read these articles would have the same experience. These differences should not have been made public, for some who are weak in the faith would be caused to stumble, and as the result might lose their souls. I felt keen regret and deep sorrow of heart, for I knew that the Lord was displeased.

But I said, "Brother Foster, you have the Bible. Search its pages with a prayerful heart; your Redeemer has promised that the Holy Spirit shall lead you into all truth. You have an Instructor who is full of wisdom, one who never errs. I charge you before God to cease worrying, receive the precious rays of light that come to you, feast upon the truth as it is in Jesus, walk in the light while you have the light, and more light will shine upon you from the Source of all light. Do not suffer your mind to dwell upon the differences you think you discern. If our leading brethren are so unwise as to allow their conflicting views to appear in the paper published to go to the world; if they present these differences before the large gatherings that assemble to worship God in the tabernacle or elsewhere, they are doing the very things the Lord Jesus told them not to do, and going directly contrary to the light given them through the Testimonies."

Now, brethren, the zeal that leads to this kind of work is not inspired of God; Christ never prompts any man to work against Christ. He will not lead us to counteract His own instruction....

Our work is clearly aggressive. Our warfare is to be directed against error and sin, not against one another. God requires us to be a strength to one another, to heal, not to destroy. We are to be constantly receiving light; and we are not to spurn the message or the messengers by whom God shall send light to His people.

Ellen G. White, January 9, 1893; *The Paulson Collection*, 149-150

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Adventist Chain Gangs

SEVENTH-DAY Adventists, as a group, have a reputation for being good, solid, law-abiding citizens. One would not normally expect to find even one, let alone a whole group of them, on the wrong side of the law. But it has happened. As much as we might wish otherwise, Adventist chain gangs are historical realities. We might also expect—as we shall see shortly—that similar measures will once again be employed against our people.

Religious persecution of Seventh-day Adventists has not been confined to the United States. If anything, it has probably been more prevalent elsewhere, but we will focus on a short period of persecution in the Southern states which conveniently illustrates a number of important points that deserve serious and frequent consideration.

The Civil War of the early 1860s was seen by many citizens of the country as a judgment of God upon a wayward nation. In this they were correct,¹ but the conclusions they reached in their efforts to improve the situation left much to be desired. In early 1864 the National Reform Association was organized to lobby the government for the enactment of a constitutional amendment officially declaring the United States a "Christian" nation. The Association's efforts proved fruitless with the federal government for more than a decade, leading to a change of tactics in the mid-1870s. Instead of spending their time working with Congress, they would concentrate on the enforcement of state Sunday laws already in existence. Most of these dated from colonial days, and had been all but forgotten for years.

By the early 1880s, Adventists began to feel the pressure. The Pacific Press published a special issue of the *Signs of the Times* devoted to the subject of Sunday legislation. In 1884 the *Sabbath Sentinel* came into existence. A small monthly paper that lasted only one year, it exerted considerable influence by sheer numbers alone with more than 500,000 copies going into circulation.

Still, these efforts were insufficient to prevent trouble. In 1885 five Adventists were arrested in Arkansas. Convicted by the court, they chose to accept jail terms instead of fines as a means of focusing public attention on the situation. In 1886 Pacific Press began publishing a new monthly, *The American Sentinel*, to champion the cause of religious liberty. In July of 1889, Adventist leaders in Battle Creek founded the National Religious Liberty Association. Despite such efforts, over the next ten years more than a hundred of their fellow believers were to be prosecuted for violation of Sunday laws. At one

point, eighteen Seventh-day Adventists served together at forced labor on a Tennessee chain gang. From this era, and from these circumstances, let us examine a number of specific lessons:

Looking for Trouble?

Contemporary accounts show that some few of those prosecuted were less than discrete in their relationship to Sunday laws. D. W. Reavis, agent for the National Religious Liberty Association, recounts one such circumstance:

"Some of our people involved in these imprisonments brought the trouble unnecessarily upon themselves. To illustrate, I cite the case of one of our canvassers. He felt he was getting the mark of the beast through not working at manual labor on Sundays. He could preach to country churches on every Sunday of the year; the churches wanted him to preach to them on Sunday. He was a good speaker, and he was at liberty to preach on any subject he wanted to.

"But in doing this, he felt he was endorsing Sunday rest. So he rented a small piece of land on a public highway, and spent his Sundays in planting and cultivating potatoes. He was arrested for Sunday labor, and the people who knew him would not buy his *Bible Readings*. I went to help him in his trouble, and from the prosecuting attorney and the judge of the court that was to try him, I found out the facts, and promised that this offense would not be repeated by this brother if they would let him off. I gave these men and all the officials there just the literature they should have to convince them that Sunday laws were unconstitutional and wrong in every way. Before the trial, these men found some irregularity in the indictment, and threw the case out of court, and no more arrests were made in that place, though some of our people there did do reasonable work on Sunday.

"I asked this canvasser why he did not canvass on Sundays, why he did not interest the people in his books through his preaching. To show him how, I took one of his appointments in a country church, and preached a sermon on baptism, using a full leather *Bible Readings* for a Bible, and when through, I explained that all I had told them was taken from that book, and that any of them, with that book, could present that subject and many others, just as well as I could. I made a short canvass and got subscriptions for it right there; I think sixteen full leather bindings were sold at that meeting. That was more than this canvasser was selling in a week."²

While we may be surprised at someone's following such a course of action, we should remember that we have the advantage of hindsight and divine instruction not available at the time. Ellen White's now-familiar counsel that "One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance,"³ was not penned until 1902.

From this brother's experience we may also learn something of the danger of allowing others to do our thinking for us. He was not the only one to take such a position. The odds are that he was only doing his best to live up to the

"truth" currently being taught by a number of influential denominational leaders. Among the points then advocated that were subsequently refuted by the Spirit of Prophecy were "(1) that the denomination should not accept exemption of its church buildings or institutional properties from civil taxation, (2) that Adventists could not morally accept gifts from governmental agencies, (3) that it was wrong for Adventists imprisoned for Sunday labor to work extra hours in place of working on the Sabbath while in jail, (4) that it was wrong to vote or participate in any way in political processes, and (5) that if Adventist employees wanted to work six days per week in denominationally owned establishments, it was wrong not to allow them to do so."⁴ (This last point led to the permanent closing of an Adventist publishing house in Switzerland when it was found in violation of factory laws designed to protect women and children from overwork.)

God's church has long been plagued by individuals who have never gained that rare commodity of common sense. When possessed of an idea, they find it necessary to ride it to the bitter end, all the while unable to see how their course violates principle on point after point. Their eyes are riveted on the elusive goal of conformity (by themselves and all others around them) to a single goal of their own choosing. All else is lost sight of.

It is fortunate that these distorted ideas of religious liberty, though strongly advocated for a time, did not gain ascendancy in the long run. The influence of Ellen White's writings was sufficient to forestall the inevitable disaster that would have come from following such leading. May the Lord ever grant His people the wisdom to recognize and turn from such impractical, unbalanced, and one-sided teaching.

Practices of the Prosecution

Some of the most important lessons we might learn from this period of our history are in understanding how the devil works through men to afflict the work and workers of God. It is a solemn reality that these scenes from the past are but a faint foretaste of what is to come to Adventists in the future. While we need not lose courage because of trouble ahead, we would do well to prepare in mind and heart for the very real crisis to come.

One of the most prominent Sunday law cases involved R. M. King, of Obion County, Tennessee. Arrested while working in his cornfield on Sunday, June 23, 1889, King found himself involved in a spiraling series of legal appeals that eventually reached the United States Supreme Court. Only his death in 1891 prevented the case from being heard by the highest court in the country. It is instructive to note that the "church people" of his area "formed a league to enforce Sunday-keeping, although nearly everybody made Sunday a day for hunting, fishing, gaming, and any kind of common labor, before and after the league's formation."

This partiality in enforcement was not entirely lost on the public. The St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* of November 30, 1885, noted:

"It is a little singular that no one else has been troubled on account of the law, with perhaps one minor exception, while members of the above denomination are being arrested over the whole State. It savors just a trifle of the religious persecution which characterized the Dark Ages."⁶

Arbitrary enforcement was typical. "In one case an Adventist returned a borrowed wheelbarrow to another Adventist one Sunday, and someone reported it. At the same time the usual Sunday work by non-Adventists went on unnoticed." The devil and his agents cannot afford to "play fair," even when they write the rules. It is often the case that those most insistent upon bringing others into line with their policies are foremost in finding ways to ignore or bend the rules of their own making when it becomes politically expedient. Quietly "looking the other way" can, after all, insure one of the good graces of any number of powerful allies. The most amazing feature of this is their inability to see the justly deserved contempt that is inspired in thinking minds for this hypocritical policy.

It often happens that the enemies of truth are hindered in their efforts by disunity among themselves. It is to be expected that a group of persons, each of whom is seeking personal benefit, should find it difficult to co-operate. Their goals, philosophies, and understandings do not mesh. Their selfish seeking of power and influence will not tolerate a rival.

In order for the devil to accomplish his ends through such workers he must somehow bring them to a united course of action. As with the Pharisees and Sadducees of old, the most promising ploy is to portray the workers of God as a threat to their personal well-being. Many besides Pilate have sold their integrity and sacrificed innocent men when convinced that their own prosperity would be threatened otherwise.

In the 1880s, such pressure resulted in the Protestant National Reformers laying aside their aversion to Catholicism and openly inviting the church of Rome into their midst. The *Christian Statesman* of December 11, 1884, said:

"Whenever they [the Roman Catholics] are willing to co-operate in resisting the progress of political atheism, we will gladly join hands with them."⁸ By "political atheism," of course, the author referred to the separation of church and state and the free exercise clause of the first amendment to the constitution.

In the same vein, the Reverend Sylvester F Scovel, a leading National Reformer, expressed his conviction that "this common interest [in Sunday] ought to strengthen both our determination to work, and our readiness to co-operate with our Roman Catholic fellow citizens.... It is one of the necessities of the situation."⁹

There is, of course, a way to be freed from such "necessities." But one must first be freed from the tyranny of self-will and human ambition. Only then can a man turn his back on the political devisings of human minds and trust his life in the hands of Him who has promised to be our strength if we will only let Him.

Another common tactic employed in these cases was the portraying of Sabbathkeepers as a threat to society at large. Though resorted to with great regularity, this approach was at times a difficult one for the prosecution. The problem, it seems, was that the exemplary behavior of the defendants left little material with which to work. All manner of accusations were made; petitions circulated in abundance to enforce the fullest extent of the law upon these troublers of the peace, but still the prosecuting attorney was all but unable to find anyone to take the stand to witness against them. In one case they actually resorted to having the two defendants testify against each other.

It seems that a godly life and strict conformity to the "rigid" requirements of the straight and narrow path of Christianity put the plaintiffs at a severe disadvantage. Keen ingenuity was called for. In one instance the prosecuting attorney was trying to build a case on the idea that the Sunday labor was a nuisance because it had been performed near a church. All the defense had to ask was, "What church?"

The lawyer replied, "The Seventh-day Adventist Church."

The foolishness of this chicanery was evident to the secular press: they freely styled such proceedings "odious sophistry" "unworthy of the age in which we live," and "neither more nor less than persecution."¹⁰ How anyone can resort to the presentation of part truths, attempting to mislead others by withholding obviously pertinent information, and still claim the name of Christ is a profound mystery. Even more unbelievable, however, is that—though forced by simple facts to abandon point after point of their argument—those stooping to such measures seem unable to realize or admit that it is they themselves who are at fault. Such is the power of self-deception and sin.

One other lesson to be gained from this period is best found in the writings of Ellen White. For obvious reasons this aspect of the events was not a prominent feature in either the secular or the religious press of the day.

"The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness. The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the undercurrent is tending. Its professions are mild, and apparently Christian, but when it shall speak, it will reveal the spirit of the dragon.""

"I have been much burdened in regard to movements that are now in progress for the enforcement of Sunday observance. It has been shown to me that Satan has been working earnestly to carry out his designs to restrict religious liberty. Plans of serious import to the people of God are advancing in an underhand manner among the clergymen of various denominations, and the object of this secret maneuvering is to win popular favor for the enforcement of Sunday sacredness."²

Again, as with the betrayal, mockery of a trial, and crucifixion of Christ, darkness and secrecy were the only appropriate environment for plans laid in harmony with the devil and his legions. Thus it was then; so it is today. We may yet expect that those whose work must be shielded away from the light of day will be found opposed to the principles of God.

In Our Time

There are, indeed, many lessons to be gained from the legal troubles of our Sabbathkeeping brethren of a century ago. But if, as we expect, we are living in the closing moments of this earth's history, there will in our case be one very sobering difference. Whereas in the 1880s the persecution of Adventists arose from the members of other churches, in the final scenes of the drama the cast will be changed. New actors will take their places on the stage.

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition.... Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them."¹³

If our generation is to see history's climax, this prophecy can mean only one thing: there are those among us today who will at last sell their souls on the cheap market of expediency and serve the devil's cause. How could it happen? How could those who once "rejoiced in the truth" so turn their backs on its principles as to employ Satan's arsenal of secrecy, half truths, and dishonest partiality?

The answer is simple—and very disturbing. In all probability these unfortunate souls will at last choose the devil's cause because they have become comfortable with his way of doing business. The little deception, the "wise" choice (for political purposes), the overlooking of a comrade's "minor infractions"—repeated practice has made these second nature. It has also left behind a trail of embarrassing evidence which must, at all costs, remain hidden. When the Lord cleanses the Remnant of *every* defilement, there will be scant comfort provided for those unwilling to deal with the skeletons of the past. "Try to sort out all the ins and outs of days gone by? That's absurd! What possible good could come from such foolishness? Let bygones be bygones. No, it would be much better to be rid of these people who insist on conformity to the Law"

Or so they reason. And all the while they remain tragically unaware that no matter what indignities they may heap on the despised children of God, no matter how securely they bind them in the prisons of the land, no matter what chain gang service they extract from them, in truth they themselves are being bound by chains stronger and more cruel. Wrapped in the chains of unconfessed and unforsaken sin, the "former brethren" will at the last be the saddest, most forlorn (ex)Adventist chain gang of all time.

The Blessing of Trial

Yet even here we may find encouragement and help from our history. Our pioneers before us have drunk the bitter cup of misrepresentation and accusa-

tion at the hands of their brethren. For James White it was a bitter and protracted lesson. Just days before his death he would confide to his wife:

"It has seemed hard to me that my motives should be misjudged, and that my best efforts to help, encourage, and strengthen my brethren should again and again be turned against me. But I should have remembered Jesus and His disappointments. His soul was grieved that He was not appreciated by those He came to bless.... I will not stop to mourn over any wrong done to me. I have expected more of men than I ought."¹⁴

Strengthened by that resolve, and made wiser by that realization, James White was to pass to his rest. One day soon there will at last be a group who have learned the same lessons. Expecting nothing good from the hands of men they will rise to a higher experience of trust in God. When all is black around them they will cling for life to the promise of His care.

1. See *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 264

2. D. W. Reavis, *I Remember*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, (1934?), 129-130

3. *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 232

4. R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, (1979), 254

5. Louis A. Hanson, *From So Small a Dream*, Southern Publishing Association, (1968), 212

6. *Ibid.*, 211

7. *Ibid.*, 216

8. Christian Edwardson, *Facts of Faith*, Southern Publishing Association, (1942), 305

9. *Ibid.*

10. Hanson, 215-216

11. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 452

12. *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1889

13. *The Great Controversy*, 608

14. *In Memoriam: A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White*, Review and Herald Press, (1881), 50-51

James T. Ringgold on Religious Liberty

In 1892 four members of the Springville, Tennessee, Seventh-day Adventist Church were brought to trial for violating Sunday laws. James T Ringgold, an attorney from Baltimore, Maryland, heard of the case and offered his services in their defense, free of charge. A member of the Episcopal Church, he nonetheless attended the 1893 General Conference session as an observer. Because of the delegates' interest in the court case, Ringgold was twice asked to address the congregation.

LADIES and Gentlemen:—I will alter that form of address, if you will allow me, and call you, my dear friends. I think that the strongest tie of friendship in the world must be interest in and a devotion to the same ideas. This is what I understand to be meant by that hymn you all know so well,

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

There are many things about your belief which I am not yet thoroughly acquainted with, and on some points as to which I have been enlightened, my mind yet remains in abeyance. It is what I do know of your belief, and what I have discovered for myself, about the character and lives of the men who hold it which has made me so earnestly desirous to learn more of the religion and to make the acquaintance of more among its followers.

I may say that the first great principle of yours with which I became acquainted struck me at once as the most marvelous tenet to be seriously maintained by a religious organization of which I had ever heard—and that was the absolute separation, not merely of other churches from the state, but of every form of religious belief, including your own. How could I fail to be astounded? I had learned from all my study of history and philosophy, I had been taught from my boyhood that toleration and zeal could never exist together.

Here I found you, a religious organization equaling any in fervor and devotion, and surpassing almost all in the minute application of your religious principles to every detail of your daily lives, and yet, not only refraining from asking any preference over other religions at the hands of the civil power, but actually refusing to accept any such preference even when tendered to

you. I say that this is something which not only astounded me at first, but which I have never ceased to contemplate with admiration and awe. Here is a religion—and a Christian religion too, let us be thankful for that—giving the lie to the wisdom of the ages, in this most important matter.

I have claimed for you in the East among my friends of other denominations that you have taken up Christianity where the martyrs laid it down, and I will further add that those who have molested you for the sake of your creed have taken up persecution where it was left by Nero and his successors....

I have been asked to tell about what I saw in Paris, Tennessee, during the recent trials of your brethren there. Well, I may say that the thing which impressed and astonished me most in Paris was the reflection of myself in the looking-glass. For I felt that here was a spectacle at which the ages to come will surely wonder. If I had not had the experience brought home to me, I would never have believed that in this nineteenth century it were possible for a man to be called upon to cross the street to defend his fellowman from religious persecution—and here was I, who had traveled fifteen hundred miles in this enlightened age for no other purpose.

You have heard the glad tidings of great joy from Paris, Tennessee. You know that we won the victory all along the line, but you do not know how ashamed we were to win it. The enemy was so weak, and so poorly equipped for fight, that to beat him seemed like spanking a small child.

But it had to be done; for the child was a very bad one. I mean no reflection on the State's Attorney. He had no case; he made all that could be made out of nothing.¹

I have recently been down in the State of Tennessee interesting myself there in the cases of some of your brethren. I have been requested to say a few words with reference to my experience there. I may say this, that I found there a hypocrisy which, if I may so put it, commanded my respect.

Perhaps this statement involves a contradiction in terms. I suppose—I do not commit myself to it as a proposition, but I suppose, or at any rate I can see that it is thinkable—that when a man has made up his mind to do an indecent or blackguardly thing, there is a gleam of morality in the desire to do it in the dark; for instance, when he writes an insulting or threatening letter, perhaps he is to be credited with the shame which prevents his signing his name to it; and when he wishes to involve his neighbor in trouble, perhaps he pays a tribute to honor and integrity when he skulks behind another to do it. This is a very profound moral question, which I will not attempt to discuss here. I found this principle existing in Tennessee—outside of Seventh-day Adventists—for there were those who wished the hand of the law to seize upon our people, but did not want to give testimony against them.

So when I had a conference with the Prosecuting Attorney, I urged him to *nolle pros* the cases on the ground of public policy, telling him that was what would be done in my State, or

at least in my city of Baltimore, and that he could not afford to go to court with such a case. But I soon found that spirit of persecution, and this spirit of animosity, is one of those things that grows by what it feeds on. To my disappointment, they would listen to no compromise, but insisted on going to trial with no evidence. But the State's Attorney had the grace and manliness to be ashamed of the proceedings, and said that nothing would give him more pleasure than to act on my suggestion, but that he could not possibly do it, because petitions were pouring in on him every day, signed by scores of citizens of the county urging him to prosecute those Adventists, but "For goodness sake, do not call us for witnesses." So the State's Attorney tried the cases, and they all went off on legal technicalities but one, and upon that one we called no witnesses. We went to the jury on the State's testimony alone...[and] our man was acquitted.

We have heard good tidings from Tennessee since that time. We have been informed that no more indictments have been found, and [there is] very little prospect for any more. For the present, at least, we have beaten the enemy, and we trust that he will stay beaten. And we are prepared to knock his ugly head whenever and wherever else it shows itself.

But as matters stood, I did have a slight change in my psychological condition. I started from home with a good deal of pity and sympathy for the Seventh-day Adventists; but before I had been there long, I began to transfer my pity to the other side. They were very badly off, indeed.

The more I saw of them, the more I felt inclined to blame you people for their condition. For you understand perfectly well what this spirit of persecution is and how it would manifest itself. But it is a very hard thing for one to harry a man or persecute him and not have him give the other any reason for doing it. That always has been a very aggravating thing. It seemed to me that if you Seventh-day Adventists had been the good Christians you call yourselves, and had acted as you would have been done by, you would not have kept behaving yourselves so well in that aggravating way. It was hard on these people, there is no doubt about it, and I could not help saying to myself for them, If you have the real spirit of Christianity that you profess to have, why, O why don't you cut somebody's throat?

There seemed to be a general feeling among the people there that you must either behave or go away, and if you refuse to do either—you see it was very hard on them. I was often encountered by persons there who said in a very querulous, complaining sort of way that those Adventists paid their debts better than anybody around there. They seemed to feel hurt about it. The only man I saw there, who did not belong to your people, and who was seriously in favor of their release, said that he wished that I would convert all of the fellows that owed him money to Seventh-day Adventism, because then he could collect his bills without suing.

My friends, I feel inclined to talk to you in a very serious manner, for that is the mood in which I find

myself the greater part of the time at present. For my own part I believe that if the Seventh-day Adventist Church had never done anything else for Christianity or the world than to give birth to the International Religious Liberty Association and follow its principles, they would have done more for hu-

manity than a Newton, a Kepler, or a Washington, or any of the greatest men that ever lived. I think this ought to entitle you to the gratitude of the nations as long as man shall live.²

1. 1893 *General Conference Bulletin*, 435-436

2. *Ibid.*, 480-481

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

How Could It Be?

THE question must have been asked by nearly all who heard, though a few may not have been surprised; after all, these things had been brewing for years. Some, perhaps, knew enough of the background to understand. But on the whole, "understanding" was a remarkably rare commodity. How could it be?

Still, the Lord had spoken, and though it made no difference to some, others felt it keenly. The words—though written in love and anguish—stung. But what did they mean? And what could be done? As the one to whom the letter was addressed, and one who—as the president of the General Conference—was in a special sense responsible, Elder Olsen certainly felt the weight of God's displeasure. His "assistants" probably did not. Harmon Lindsay and A. R. Henry had heard much from Ellen White in past years. So much in fact, that one more reproving letter didn't seem to make any difference.

"Wrong principles remain unchanged. The same work that has been done in the past will be carried forward under the guise of the General Conference Association. The sacred character of this association is fast disappearing. What will then be respected as pure, holy, and undefiled? Will there be any voice that God's people can regard as a voice they can respect? There certainly is nothing now that bears the divine credentials. Sacred things are mixed and mingled with earthly business that has no connection with God.

"To a large degree the General Conference Association has lost its sacred character because some connected with it have not changed their sentiments in any particular since the conference held at Minneapolis....

"The enslaving of the souls of men by their fellow men is deepening the darkness which already envelops them. Who can now feel sure that they are safe in respecting the voice of the General Conference Association? If the people in our churches understood the management of the men who walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, would they respect their decisions? I answer, No, not for a moment. I have been shown that the people at large do not know that the heart of the work is being diseased and corrupted at Battle Creek."

These quotations are known to many, no doubt. Often these and other similar statements have been presented as "conclusive evidence" that the Seventh-day Adventist Church, by virtue of divine fiat, has been cast off by the Lord, nevermore to enjoy her status as the special object of His love.

Unfortunately, those who present this view seem woefully unfamiliar with the practice and writings of the prophet over the next nineteen years. All is not so gloomy as one might conclude from these statements alone.

Difficult Times

Nevertheless, for a number of years around the turn of the century we see a period of extreme difficulty. Ellen White was not given to exaggeration, and when she said that the Lord was displeased, it would have been in our best interest as a people to pay close heed. Some did, no doubt; many did not.

Nearly a century later, we look back and wonder what all the fuss was about. Just exactly what was wrong? Were these men teaching heresy? Had they rejected the message of righteousness by faith? Does that mean they believed they could work their own way to heaven? That we might gain some benefit from this bleak period of our sacred history, let's examine the record.

Ellen White tells us clearly that her own nephew, Frank Belden, "did more than any other one man in the [Review and Herald] office to bring in wrong sentiments and carry out his own plans." But it was not all his fault. Writing to him in November of 1892 she acknowledged that "Captain Eldridge's influence over you has not been right in some things. Your influence with him might have been much more to his good and the glory of God than it has been."³

And so we find Frank Belden, the superintendent of the Review and Herald Publishing House, and "Captain" Clement Eldridge, the general manager of the Publishing Association, exerting an influence upon each other, the other workers with whom they associated, and the work of the church as a whole. Unfortunately, the influence was too seldom for the better. These two key men shared a common desire for money, and together they found ways to pursue this goal which was of more value to them than the service of Christ.

Before she left for Australia in 1891, Ellen White sought to provide a correcting influence for this developing problem. "The Lord laid upon me a burden in regard to the publishing house at Battle Creek. In the council room at the tabernacle I read a message to a large number assembled. The same matter was afterwards repeated to the managers of the publishing house. All was done that I could do. I had the matter copied, and placed in the hands of responsible persons, to see that the will of the Lord was carried out. But time passed, and the necessary changes were not made. The message laid out, in clear lines, the principles that should ever govern the office of publication. It was stated that if selfishness should be developed, if the men in office should accept large wages, the blessing of the Lord could not attend the institution until these things should be corrected."

Dealing With Selfish Men

Many today would consider such a course as the prophet suggested to be "uncharitable" at best. Still, we are faced with the fact that it was the messenger of God who wrote, "Men who are controlled by selfish desires should not

remain connected with our institutions, and their course of action had better be exposed, that every church of Seventh-day Adventists may know what principles govern these men."

Unfortunately, this counsel was not followed, and the influence of Eldridge and Belden spread to two other highly-placed officers in denominational affairs—Harmon Lindsay, General Conference treasurer, and A. R. Henry, treasurer of the Publishing Association. These four men, though they refused to realize it at the time, suffered terribly from the strongly reinforced influence for evil which they provided one another. Another who suffered from their influence—despite what seems to have been an honest desire to do right—was O. A. Olsen, president of the General Conference.

"It was the duty of the president of the General Conference when he was convinced that a wrong estimate was placed upon men, to stand firmly against such a course of action; but he has not always done this, because he was afraid of you [A. R. Henry] and of Captain Eldridge.... When Elder Olsen's voice should have been heard in remonstrance and rebuke, that voice was not heard. He did not have faith in God to lay his hand firmly upon that which, under the control of the Spirit of God, he knew to be wrong; and without hindrance you have pursued your own course."⁶

Of foremost importance to the publishing house management team was to turn as much profit as possible on the sale of books. Realizing that they made a better return on *Bible Readings for the Home* than on *The Great Controversy*, Belden and Eldridge adopted a policy of allowing only one book "in the field" at a time. That book, of course, was *Bible Readings*. *The Great Controversy* sat idle for nearly three years despite the pleadings of Ellen White that it was *the* book for the time. Considering the agitation for Sunday laws during this period, we can only wonder what might have happened if the book had been vigorously marketed.

Sister White spoke with unusual force in writing her nephew about the course he had chosen. "You said you did as much to recommend my books as you did for other publications, but that you dared not make a specialty of my books, lest others should say it was because I was your 'Aintie.' I was disgusted at this talk. Precious truth and light given to prepare a people for the great day of God had been left in obscurity, and this was the flimsy excuse offered."⁷

High Wages

Once the association profits were up, wages could be increased—at least some wages. Frank Belden provides an interesting account of how the salaries of first Clement Eldridge, and then A. R. Henry, Uriah Smith, Harmon Lindsay, and finally himself were raised to the then-scandalous figure of \$30 per week.⁸

Again, the prophet's letters from across the ocean offered counsel. "These very men that are counterworking the cause of God, these selfish men are the ones with whom you labored to receive from the treasury means. I knew that your voice did more than any other voice to rob the treasury of God and to

put means into selfish hands, into the hands of men that were not sanctified through the truth. This was why, Frank, I could not sustain you."⁹

Warnings continued to come, urging these men to accept the simple principles of fairness and selflessness. They should have listened to what she had to say, for future events were to bear her out. 'A false balance is a symbol of all unfair dealing, all devices to conceal selfishness and injustice under an appearance of fairness and equity. God will not in the slightest degree favor such practices. He hates every false way. He abhors all selfishness and covetousness. Unmerciful dealing He will not tolerate, but will repay in kind.'

The wages were eventually lowered to \$20, but by that time the other members of the group had turned on Belden, attacking his work record and refusing to pay him a royalty on publications which they claimed he had written, admittedly on his own time, but during the period of his employment at the Review. They reasoned that, as his employer, the publishing house owned any product of his skills." As he had been told to expect, he was being repaid in kind.

"That you have not been treated fairly, and in an unselfish, Christlike manner, I know. The same spirit that your confederacy exercised toward others, has been exercised toward you."¹²

Ellen White vigorously protested both the high wages and the unjust treatment of authors. Neither position increased her popularity in Battle Creek. "There are some who have not had kindly feelings toward me because they were deprived of these large wages. Such feelings were indulged by Captain Eldridge, Brother [A. R.] Henry, Frank Belden, and others. Never will any one of these men be clear before God until he makes restitution to the Lord's cause for that of which the selfish, avaricious spirit has robbed the work."¹³

In 1893, both Frank Belden and Captain Eldridge chose to resign from their positions with the Review to seek private employment. Though this was a blessing inasmuch as it removed an increasingly poor influence, it also presented a challenge by propelling Harmon Lindsay and A. R. Henry into more prominent roles within the Lord's work. Neither was prepared for this responsibility, as they had learned the lessons of selfishness and grasping all too well.

They had also learned the art of manipulating men, and were busy solidifying their place in the corporate power structure. Again, perhaps the greatest loser was Elder Olsen.

"You have connected with you men who have no living connection with God. You fear to exercise your judgment, lest there shall be an explosion. This is why I feel so sad.... The two men who have been especially associated with you should, in their present spiritual condition, have no part in planning and carrying forward the work of God in any of its various lines."¹⁴

In reading the record of these sad years, one cannot but be impressed with the veritable stream of counsel, instruction, admonition, and pleading which came from the pen of Ellen White. Elder Olsen presents the heart-touching figure of one who wants to do right, who desires the Lord's favor, but is

somehow unable to bring himself to *take action*. What could Ellen White do from thousands of miles away? Little, it seemed, except to keep writing.

"Bodies of Death"

"For years I have carried a consuming burden for the cause of God in Battle Creek. I am now deeply troubled over the shape which matters are taking there, and the influence which is being exerted on the work everywhere. I ask you, my brother, how can you entrust A. R. Henry and Harmon Lindsay with so much responsibility in the work, and send them hither and thither to **all** parts of the field?"¹⁵

"Harmon Lindsay will either be converted to the truth or be disconnected from the work. A. R. Henry and Harmon Lindsay believe not the third angel's message. They are not only saying in their hearts, 'My Lord delayeth His coming,' but in spirit, in words, and actions wherever they go. It pains me to see these two bodies of death sent from place to place upon important business in connection with the cause of God, when they are imbued with the spirit of Satan working in secret. They have not the Spirit of God. They are separated from God, and have been ever since the Minneapolis meeting."¹⁶

Obviously, the situation was serious. Ellen White sought every avenue she could use to reach these stubborn and wayward hearts. They were, after all, souls for the kingdom if only they could be won over to righteousness. As her son Edson was preparing to visit Battle Creek, she sought to inspire and instruct him as to the role he might play. It was hard, of course, for Edson had recently been on the losing end of an encounter with the financial powers-that-be at the Review. We would do well, in similar situations, to remember her advice.

"If you can do so in an unobtrusive way, try to help Brother Olsen, and stay up his hands. He needs sympathy, and words of hopefulness and courage. But please do not cast reflection upon the men who have not a living connection with God. If you are considerate, you may do good to A. R. Henry, and Harmon Lindsay. Show by your attitude that you hold no bitterness toward them. Whatever their attitude toward you, let it not discourage you or embitter your experience. Hold fast to Jesus.... Do not indulge in hasty speech. If possible, we want to save these men, who know so little of the Spirit of God. In order to do this, while you should not depend on them as gods, be kind and courteous, treat them as respectfully as though they had been your best friends."¹⁷

Despite **all** that could be done to correct matters, the wrong influence of these men began to be felt and manifest in ever-expanding circles. Its forms were many; common to them all was the tendency to grasp power—power over money, power over institutions, power over men.

"I tell you that which I know: God has been greatly dishonored by the conniving to bring money into the office by robbing brain workers of their rights. Brother Olsen needs to have as colaborers different men to represent the cause of God."¹⁸

"Satan has been working with all his powers of deception to bring matters to that pass where the way will be hedged up for the want of means in the treasury."-

Dealing With Donations

In the early months of 1894 Ellen White was faced with the challenge of moving ahead aggressively in the development of the Australian work while hampered by a dearth of available funding. Just as the money ran out, word came from Elder Haskell that two men in California had donated a total of \$10,000 to the cause, and \$1,000 of that would be sent to Australia by the next mail shipment. Anxiously awaiting this deliverance from her difficulties, Ellen White tells how they received instead "the news that Brother Haskell took the first payment of the \$10,000 to the Pacific Press to send here [Australia], and Brother [C. H.] Jones said they needed the money at the Press, and then it would go into the general fund. I was not only grieved but indignant."²⁰

Writing directly to Jones, she said, "When I received Brother Haskell's letter explaining that you had detained the money we so much need, I wanted to ask you, my brother, What right had you to do this?... Are not the individuals who pledged the money responsible to God? Is not a man to be left free, when moved upon by the Spirit of God, to place his means where he sees fit?... Let the money that comes from those whom God has made His stewards be received and treated as a sacred offering, and be applied where it was designed. This will tend to inspire confidence and encourage liberality in those whom God has made His stewards."²¹

Although this may have been the most serious case, it was not a rare occurrence in principle. 'After I had witnessed the confederacy for raising the wages of the workers in the Office, the Lord brought me into the meetings of the auditing committee that settle with the ministers for their labor.... Brother Henry's voice was the controlling power, cutting down wherever he pleased, deciding the wages of the workers according to his ideas and feelings....

'All who were concerned in the payment of the large wages have been guilty of robbery toward God. 'Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me, saith the Lord.' And the result has been that God's messengers and workers who are poor in earthly treasure are pressed into hard places."²²

Trouble at the Treasury

It seems that the methods and the earnestness with which certain of the brethren sought funds was counterproductive. That their "keen financial policies" could result in depleting the treasury must have come as a shock to Lindsay and Henry.

'A condition of things has been brought about, that, unless God in mercy shall interpose, will work disaster to His cause.... For reasons that you [A. R. Henry and Harmon Lindsay] can give, God is not moving upon the hearts of His people to supply the treasury"²³

"How can God move upon the churches to contribute their hard-earned means to be handled by men who are self-sufficient, selfish, and so arrogant and overbearing that the frown of God is upon them? Our institutions need cleansing as did the temple when Christ was upon the earth. Man lords it over men's consciences, man dictates to his fellow men as God. Everywhere throughout the field this spirit is leavening hearts with the same narrow and selfish purposes. Reaction must come, and who shall then set things in order?"²⁴

The well-documented tendency to consolidate all the church's institutions under the authority of Battle Creek was a manifestation of this same desire for power. "Battle Creek" in practicality meant little more than a small group of administrators, Henry and Lindsay prominent among them. As might be expected, Sister White saw matters in a different light. When these men began the work of taking control of various denominational institutions, assuming the indebtedness of some and buying others at ridiculously low prices, she spoke once more.

"If its [the publishing house] managers were not swelled with self-importance and self-sufficiency, they would not feel that they could carry every crippled institution. The showing of their own institution is anything but favorable."²⁵

Oppressive Control

In the final analysis, no such control in any of these areas was possible without the ability to control the men involved. Here they crossed into an area which raised the ire, not only of the prophet, but of all heaven as well.

"The presidents of conferences are being imbued with a spirit to rule, to require men to bow to their judgment; if any refuse, the course pursued toward them is such as to fill Heaven with indignation."m

"Men who know little of the working of the Spirit of God upon their own hearts have exalted themselves beyond measure in undertaking to force others to accept their terms and come under their control. There are those who regard no man's judgment as superior, or even equal to their own. They are narrowing the work by disregarding the suggestions of men of experience, because these ideas do not coincide with their own plans. At the same time these very ones are not willing for others to exercise their independent judgment. Plans are set on foot for restricting the liberty of the workers. Through these oppressive plans, men who should stand free in God are trammelled by restrictions from those who are only their fellow laborers."²⁷

"The time is near when God by His providence will make manifest what principles have been cherished by the men connected with the management of His work. Unless these men are converted, they will be separated from the work."²⁸

"It is not the work of any man to prescribe the work for any other man contrary to his own convictions of duty. He is to be advised and counseled, but he is to seek his directions from God, whose he is, and whom he serves."²⁹

"If it were possible, the enemy would clog the wheels of progress, and prevent the truths of the gospel from being circulated everywhere. With this

object he leads men to feel that it is their privilege to control the consciences of their fellow men according to their own perverted ideas. They dismiss the Holy Spirit from their councils, and then, under the power and name of the General Conference, they invent regulations through which they compel men to be ruled by their own ideas and not by the Holy Spirit.

"The plans to obtain control of human minds and ability are as strange fire, which is an offense to God."³⁰

Going to Court

When puny man pits his might and wits against the Almighty, the limitations of humanity became sadly apparent. But one who has so long sought his own way finds it hard to abandon the search for power. Too often that search leads to the civil authorities as a last hope. Thus it was, first with A. R. Henry, and some years later with Frank Belden. Filing suit in civil court, they brought perplexity upon themselves and upon the church. In 1898 Ellen White was forced to lament, "This action, of appealing to human courts, never before entered into by Seventh-day Adventists, has now been done. God has permitted this that you who have been deceived may understand what power is controlling those who have had entrusted to them great responsibilities."³¹

The shortsightedness which had retained Henry for so long in the work of the Lord, now threatened to involve the church in a dangerous dependence upon the courts of the world. In a letter to Uriah Smith and G. A. Irwin [Olsen's successor as General Conference president], Ellen White advised, "You who are engaged in opening the things connected with our work to lawyers, will realize that those who trust the things connected with our work to those who know not God, will be left to trust to the law, and will have all the law they want until their souls are satisfied. God will not be their Counselor."³²

The 1890s were not an easy period for our church. Indeed, it all sounds pretty grim. But bear in mind that this period represents a low point in our history; Ellen White *did* find some ground for encouragement in later years.

Lessons for Today

But, really, even these "later years" are not the focus of our interest. Their record has passed into history as well; we cannot alter it now. Rather, our focus must be the present and the immediate future. What lessons can we learn from the past? What missteps can we avoid? We are not playing games. We are deciding our eternal destiny by our actions today. More than that, we are working to either hasten or delay the second coming of Christ.

"The third angel's message is to be sounded by God's people. It is to swell to the loud cry. The Lord has a time appointed when He will bind off the work; but when is that time? When the truth to be proclaimed for these last days shall go forth as a witness to all nations, then shall the end come. If the power of Satan can come into the very temple of God, and manipulate things as he pleases, the time of preparation will be prolonged."³³

This church must not be burdened down with sins and errors of the devil's devising. Every soul has a part to play, an influence to exert. For the sake of our Lord, let it be on the side of right. "The real efficiency of the church rests upon a few whose moral powers may be taxed unnecessarily by bearing the burdens and counteracting influences of created suspicion and doubt."³⁴

"The eternal God has drawn the line of distinction between the saints and the sinners, the converted and the unconverted. The two classes do not blend into each other imperceptibly, like the colors of the rainbow. They are as distinct as midday and midnight."³⁵

The lessons, the principles, are still valid today. Times change, people change, but God's truth does not. As the stewards of our sacred denominational history we must profit from the Lord's teaching in our past. We must each decide if these things mean anything to us or not. Does the Lord's condemnation of exorbitant wages in the past have any application today? Can we find no lessons in the counsel concerning going to court? If we try, of course, we will find ways to ignore God's instruction, to rationalize away the disturbing things the Lord has taught us. But someday we will know how little we have gained by so doing.

Would it not be wiser to believe what has been given to us through Inspiration? To simply take it at its obvious meaning and order our lives after it?

1. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1566-1568

2. *The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters*, 120

3. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1071

4. *Ibid.*, 1230

5. *Manuscript Releases vol. 1*, 197

6. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1295-1296

7. *Ibid.*, 1383

8. See *Manuscripts and Memories of Minneapolis 1888*, 281

9. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1473-1474

10. *Ibid.*, 1101

11. See *Manuscripts and Memories of Minneapolis 1888*, 281

12. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1392

13. *Ibid.*, 1261

14. *Ibid.*, 1322

15. *Ibid.*, 1421

16. *Ibid.*, 1472

17. *Ibid.*, 1463

18. *Ibid.*, 1359

19. *Ibid.*, 1500

20. *Ibid.*, 1265

21. *Ibid.*, 1234-1236

22. *Ibid.*, 1384

23. *Ibid.*, 1366

24. *Ibid.*, 1400-1401

25. *Ibid.*, 1518

26. *Ibid.*, 1400

27. *Ibid.*, 1357-1358

28. *Ibid.*, 1368

29. *Ibid.*, 1269

30. *Ibid.*, 1528

31. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 303

32. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 218

33. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1525

34. *Ibid.*, 1155

35. *Ibid.*, 1333

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Ellen G. White on Her Call to Australia

Ellen White spent nearly nine years (December 1891 to September 1900) laboring in Australia and New Zealand. During that time the general health of the denomination declined precipitously—especially at denominational headquarters in Battle Creek. The following selections shed some light on this turbulent period.

ELDER Olsen, I wish to say to you, You must not make any calculation for me to go to Africa. I see no light and consistency in such a move. It is time for me to find some retired place, and have quietude and rest of spirit. I have been in the turmoil of battle for fifty years, and I do not wish to hold on to the active service until I do not know when it is time to let go. I think that period has come when I must lay off cares and perplexities that meet me in new fields. I have some little strength yet left.

There is no need that any one should tell me of Africa. I know just as well what I would meet there as what my brethren do; for me it would be the hardest field I have ever attempted to work in. The mixture of elements I am acquainted with; for the Lord has opened the situation to me. I am more disinclined to visit Africa since the brethren Wessells have come into possession of the property they have received. I know that this would make it very much

harder for me. If the Lord should send them a Testimony through me, I fear they would not receive it; I know their peril is greatly increased since they received this property, and if they reject the warnings from God, they will lose their souls. I know that the enemy stands ready to misinterpret all that I may say or write to them; I have been decidedly told by Brother Phillip Wessells that he wants no more letter's from me.

I have not the slightest inclination to go to Europe or to visit Africa, and I have not one ray of light that I should go. I am willing to go wherever the Lord indicates my duty, but I am not willing to go at the voice of the Conference unless I see my own way clear to do so. I know they would not wish me to do this. I do not yet feel inclined to go to America; for there would be so much work to do there that it would not be wisdom for me to go. I will remain here for further orders from the Lord to bid me how to move. I

thought I ought to tell you, so that you would not be thinking I would go, when I do not feel that it is my duty. Let younger persons engage in the conflict.'

DEAR Brother Olsen: It is your privilege to draw nigh to God, and put your entire trust in Him. He understands all about the mistakes of the past, and He will help you. But wherever you may be, never, never tread over the same ground. You have done a sad work, but do not repeat it. Be decided, be firm. When you have a clear perception of the work the Lord would have done, take no divided or neutral course, but do that work in the fullest sense, irrespective of imaginary consequences.

Christ says to you: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." These words mean a great deal more than many suppose. If you had placed yourself under the yoke of Christ, you would not have been in the position you have been in for years. Your readiness to hear and to accept the propositions of unsanctified men, and yoke up with them, has revealed a great lack of moral perception. The very first step in the direction of withdrawing your neck from Christ's yoke was revealed in your divided position.

When the burden was pressing so heavily upon me in Battle Creek, I can truly say there was not one who understood the position in which I was placed. God's people must stand shoulder to shoulder, their

hearts one, their purposes one, uniting to follow in the light God has given in clear lines. But there has been so much haggling over matters. I have had to bear the burdens which others ought to have shared with me, and it nearly cost me my life. A round of circumstances, which I have understood for years, has been the result. This has been at tremendous cost to me financially and in many other respects.

I have not, I think, revealed the entire workings that led me here to Australia. Perhaps you may never fully understand the matter. The Lord was not in our leaving America. He did not reveal that it was His will that I should leave Battle Creek. The Lord did not plan this, but He let you all move after your own imaginings. The Lord would have had W. C. White, his mother, and her workers remain in America. We were needed at the heart of the work, and had your spiritual perception discerned the true situation, you would never have consented to the movements made. But the Lord read the hearts of all. There was so great a willingness to have us leave, that the Lord permitted this thing to take place. Those who were weary of the Testimonies borne were left without the persons who bore them. Our separation from Battle Creek was to let men have their own will and way, which they thought superior to the way of the Lord.

The result is before you. Had you stood in the right position the move would not have been made at that time. The Lord would have worked for Australia by other means and a strong influence

would have been held at Battle Creek, the great heart of the work. There we should have stood shoulder to shoulder, creating a healthful atmosphere to be felt in all our conferences. It was not the Lord who devised this matter. I could not get one ray of light to leave America. But when the Lord presented this matter to me as it really was, I opened my lips to no one, because I knew that no one would discern the matter in all its bearings. When we left, relief was felt by many, but not so much by yourself, and the Lord was displeased; for He had set us to stand at the wheels of the moving machinery at Battle Creek.

This is the reason I have written you. Elder Olsen had not the perception, the courage, the force, to carry the responsibilities; nor was there any other man prepared to do the work the Lord had purposed we should do. I wrote to you, Elder Olsen, telling you that it was God's design that we should stand side by side with you, to counsel you, to advise you, to move with you. If even then you had discerned the matter, and said, I must have you, or I dare not stand in this position, we would have answered the call. Had you said, I cannot bear these responsibilities alone, we would have responded, and returned. But the Lord saw the inward workings of matters, and He permitted you to discern that your own strength was not sufficient. You were not discerning; you were willing to have the strong experience and knowledge that comes from no human source removed from you, and thus you revealed

that the Lord's ways were miscalculated and overlooked.

This is now in the past, but I wrote you in explanation of the letter written to you while we were in Granville, 1894. Such great responsibilities call for the continual counsel of God, that they may be carried forward in a right way. But this counsel was not considered a necessity. That the people of Battle Creek should feel that they could have us leave at the time we did, was the result of man's devising, and not the Lord's. The sum of the matter is proved, and its figures are before you. We are here. The Battle Creek matters have been laid before me at this great distance, and the load I have carried has been very heavy to bear.

I do not suppose I shall ever revisit America. I shall be seventy years old next November. The Lord designed that we should be near the publishing houses, that we should have easy access to these institutions that we might counsel together. Because of the moves that have been made, many publications that should have been issued before this have been retarded; the great amount of writing that has been necessary in order to communicate with America has hindered this work. I never expect to visit Africa. I desire quietude. And yet I am here in Australia with funds low, and straining every nerve and muscle to establish the work here.

What will be our future destiny no man can know.'

1. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1263-1264
2. *Ibid.*, 1621-1624

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Convenient Instruction

HAVE you ever imagined how incredibly convenient it would be to have on-the-spot counsel from a prophet of the Lord? No more perplexities, no more agonizing over distressing decisions, no more theological uncertainties. Just think how simple life would be.

Now then, would it really be like that? Would it really be simple? Or would we find our stubborn wills rising up in opposition to the will of God? Remember, the Pharisees applauded the prophets of old—after they were dead and gone.

Very few people have been comfortable having a prophet of the Lord near at hand. History is replete with examples of prophets who were not accepted in their own country. Yet we find it remarkably easy to believe that, somehow, *we* are different. In a thousand ways, conscious and unconscious, we collectively reject the thought with an anguished protest:

"We wouldn't be that way. Why, less than a century ago we had a prophet right among us, and she wasn't thrown into a pit or sawn asunder. And we still cherish her writings; just look at all the books she wrote!"

That is exactly what we should do; but far more than looking, we need to be diligently studying those writings, for they answer our questions and meet our perplexities better than we know. And, too, they will tell us more about ourselves than we may at first want to know. But that is part of a prophet's task.

It is interesting to note that Ellen White found people both too willing and too reluctant to receive her advice. In 1868 she recounted her response when she and her husband were faced with "the inquiry: Shall I do this? Shall I engage in that enterprise? Or, in regard to dress, Shall I wear this or that article? I answer them: You profess to be disciples of Christ. Study your Bibles. Read carefully and prayerfully the life of our dear Saviour when He dwelt among men upon the earth. Imitate His life, and you will not be found straying from the narrow path. We utterly refuse to be conscience for you. If we tell you just what to do, you will look to us to guide you, instead of going directly to Jesus for yourselves. Your experience will be founded in us. You must have an experience for yourselves, which shall be founded in God. Then can you stand amid the perils of the last days, and be purified and not consumed by the fire of affliction through which all the saints must pass in order to have the impurities removed from their character preparatory to receiving the finishing touch of immortality."¹

On the other side of the question was the tendency to resist or ignore the specific counsel which the Lord did choose to send through His messenger. "I have been looking over the Testimonies given for Sabbathkeepers and I am astonished at the mercy of God and His care for His people in giving them so many warnings....

"I have almost despaired as I have seen, year after year, a greater departure from that simplicity which God has shown me should characterize the life of His followers. There has been less and less interest in, and devotion to, the cause of God. I ask: Wherein have those who profess confidence in the Testimonies sought to live according to the light given in them? Wherein have they regarded the warnings given? Wherein have they heeded the instructions they have received?"²

These are questions we all might well ask ourselves. It is especially important that we do so, for we no longer have the prophet to urge the answers upon us. If we don't care to know, or don't put forth the effort to know, we probably never will. And that is a frightening thought.

The work of Ellen White was largely made up of repeating over and over again the truths which God had shown her, seeking every possible way to get people to take them seriously. Many did, many never did. And many who were blinded at one time eventually realized their condition, often through the persevering effort of Ellen White.

George Butler

A particularly interesting example is George I. Butler. As a member of the Ezra Butler family, George could trace his contact with Adventism back to two personal visits in their home by none other than William Miller himself. In 1850, James and Ellen White spent a number of days in the Butler home. George watched them closely, looking for the flaws he had so readily found in many other professed Christians. James White was somewhat intimidating, but years later he would write of Ellen, "even then I liked her"

Eventually converted from the infidelity of his youth through the personal influence of J. N. Andrews, George went on to become a preacher of some renown and, finally, the president of the General Conference. Anyone familiar with the legacy he left behind cannot doubt that George Butler took his religion seriously. As did a number of his contemporaries, he wore himself to exhaustion in his efforts to serve his Lord.

Unfortunately, his best efforts were sometimes seriously flawed. In the early 1880s he sought to explain in the pages of the *Review and Herald* the inspiration of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, but woefully missed the mark. Again, it was largely the influence of Elder Butler which did so much to close the minds of others to the presentations of E. J. Waggoner and A. I. Jones at the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference session.

In his efforts to clarify the subject of inspiration, he had meant no harm. When Ellen White rebuked him soundly, the unexpectedness of her response probably hurt as much as what she had to say.⁴ And it was absolutely incom-

prehensible to him that Ellen White did not support his position in regard to Jones and Waggoner.

Ill health had detained him at the time of the Minneapolis Conference, and he was far from prepared for what was to come. Years later he would recall, "As they [the delegates] came back from the Minneapolis meeting, I seemed to be left alone. Sister White called me up to her room in the hospital, and talked to me three or four hours, when my head seemed as though it would burst, and I was in an awful condition.... It seemed as though I could not endure it, but I did. I said very little, I did not say anything disrespectful.... My dear, good wife, for years held it against me, because I did not get angry and go for Sister White with all my might.... I said, if Sister White is a prophet of the Lord, as I have always and do still believe [1904], she must have 'elbow room.'... My poor wife never could get her feelings fully brought around, until just a little while before her death, so that she could feel sweetly and kindly over these things."⁵

Broken in health, the ex-president moved to Florida, partly to nurse his sick wife, and partly to leave behind the bitter memories of Battle Creek. He was shocked, indignant—and unrepentant. Only slowly would he "come around."

Unrepentant

And herein lies the importance of this account. George Butler was unrepentant; if you had asked him, he would have told you so. But he did not believe he was rebellious. At the time, he honestly believed he had nothing of which to repent. Years later, when Dr. Kellogg was refusing to acknowledge the counsels of Sister White, Butler related his own experience in an effort to help his friend.

"I cannot, and will not make a confession, as I have told Sister White, over and over again, when I was in Florida, that I could not see to be right, and justly required of me. She used to write me, over and over, about the Minneapolis meeting, and things of that kind, and I invariably wrote right back to her that it was utterly useless for me to go making confessions I did not believe were called for."

But Ellen White was calling for him to confess. Didn't he believe she spoke with more than human wisdom? Yes, and no. And so the Lord in His mercy gave His erring servant 12 years of solitude to come to the realization which he might have come to much, much faster.

He explained to Kellogg in his own inimitable style: "I was put in a close and trying place, believing as I do, in her Testimonies. I told her I could never make the mistake Elder _____ made. She said in a Testimony to me, that was published, the greatest mistake Elder _____ ever made was professing to be in union [with Elder James White] when he was not. I have quoted that to her several times in my letters. You know Brother _____ would do that. He would be in the presence of Brother and Sister White, and a whole lot of the Brethren, and Brother White would take positions that in his heart he [Elder

_____] did not believe were true, and yet he would seem to assent to it, just as though he thought it was all right. But he would come to me (he and I were very fast friends) and tell me the whole thing. Over and over he used to do this. I knew it was his weakness, and that he had been brought under such pressure in the past that he did not dare to do any other way.

"Finally one day, when we were together alone, I says, 'Brother _____ why do you do so? Why do you profess to be in union with Brother White, and then you will come to me and tell me that you are not?' He said, 'I cannot help it, George.' Well,' I says, 'Brother _____, I cannot do that.' He says, 'George, you will have to.' I says, 'No, I shall not, Brother _____.' Says he, 'You will have to do it.' Says I, 'Brother _____,' (and I said it with a good deal of force, I tell you) '*I shall never do it,*' and I never have done it, Dr. Kellogg, yet."⁶

Arguing With the Lord

Elder Butler learned only slowly that the Lord knew him better than he knew himself. While it would certainly have been wrong to profess to believe that which he did not believe, the long years of sorrow and affliction eventually showed him that to admit that the Lord spoke the truth—even when he could not fully understand it—was not a dishonorable thing to do. This was the lesson which he tried unsuccessfully to share in later years with John Kellogg:

"Twenty or thirty years ago, I used to say sometimes, I thought the Doctor believed the Testimonies more than he did the Bible. Now that might have been a very unjust statement. I won't pretend to say about that, Doctor, but that is the way it used to seem to me. I did think, for many, many years that you were one of the strongest believers in the Testimonies I knew of. I could not say it today, and why? On what ground could I base this difference? Well, I will venture to suggest most everybody believes the Testimonies very strongly as long as they favor them, and sustain them, and stand up for them, and fight their battles. The time when they become questionable about the Testimonies is when the Testimonies begin to reprove them, and present before them certain faults, and wrong courses, or methods, or motives of action. Then is when the faith begins to ooze out at the finger ends, you know, Doctor.

"Now, it seems almost cruel for me to say this of you, but I really seem to be forced to. I very much dislike to say it, because it seems to put my friend in rather an unpleasant attitude, that he would stand up for the Testimonies through thick and thin, and apparently believe them with all his heart, but just as soon as they began to show certain faults in him, all at once he began to weaken.

"Now, I have been through all these experiences myself. I have had Testimonies, I tell you, that shaved to the very quick. I know all about that. I have had them time and again, and they came upon me like a hail storm. Were you ever out in a hail storm, Doctor? If not, you cannot realize altogether the

experience. When those little chunks of ice come down and hit you in a way you don't want to be hit, it is anything but a pleasant experience.

"It is so with the Testimonies. They always take you in a place where you never dreamed of being to blame, and it takes a lot of study before you can really come to the point of cheerfully accepting them. I feel very thankful to God that, although I have been cut by the Testimonies, as sharply, I think, as most any man has, and it just took all I could do to retain my faith and confidence, I never have given up the Testimonies, and never have spoken slightingly of them, in a single instance I can recall."

Sadly, though, Elder Butler's example spoke far more loudly than his voice. The story of the 1880s and 1890s in Battle Creek is a sorry one, and much of the trouble stemmed from the previous influence and continuing resistance of George Butler. Though he never made total shipwreck of his own faith, others failed to navigate the stormy waters of doubt and impenitence. Ellen White suffered much personal abuse, and the Spirit of the Lord was grieved time and again by the course of rebellion chosen by those upon whom had been laid responsibilities for which they were far from qualified. What might have been, what blessings the Lord had in store for His people if they had been willing to move forward in step with Him, we can only imagine.⁸

Nevertheless, we are fortunate enough to end our account on an encouraging note: Elder Butler may have been slow, much of the damage done by his influence was never undone, but he himself eventually gained the benefit of the Lord's chastening. Ellen White records: "I see in Elder Butler one who has humbled his soul before God. He has another spirit than the Elder Butler of younger years. He has been learning his lesson at the feet of Jesus."⁹

Instruction for Us

That which George Butler took twelve years to realize, Doctor Kellogg never did. And now the years have fled past. Ellen White, George Butler, and John Kellogg all sleep in death. Today the same issues come, not to someone safely removed by the passage of time, but to us. You and I can only expect that similar tests will be applied to our souls to discover the dross that remains. We can only expect that the testimony of the Spirit will be unexpected when it comes in reproof.

But can we expect twelve years, and letter after letter, all urging the same point upon our attention time and again? No; the prophet's voice is silenced now. But the truth remains, and God is still in the business of saving souls.

"I was shown that God would not frequently point out the wrongs committed by His people, but would cause to be given in their hearing general principles, close, pointed truths; and all should be open to conviction to see, to feel, and understand whether or not they are condemned. You have not dealt closely and faithfully with your own soul. Said the angel, 'I will prove him. I will test him, I will walk contrary unto him, until he acknowledges the hand of God in thus dealing with him.' "¹⁰

What will it be that will test me? What will test you? Only time will tell. But it rests with us each what the outcome of the test will be. Though the Lord will do all He can to win our hearts, correcting us when we err, dare we drift along in a daze, ignoring His Word, neglecting the testimony of His Spirit just because we are too blind to recognize our sins? I rather suspect that if old Brother Butler were here today, he would point back to the long, painful years of his experience, and encourage us to learn from it.

Doubting Thomas had his request fulfilled that he might see the resurrected Christ. Dare we demand the same before we believe? Elder Butler placed his judgment over and above that of the messenger of the Lord; were it not for her perseverance he very probably would never have changed his course in the least. The Lord was extremely patient with him; but dare we presume that His patience will extend as long with us?

We cannot afford to lightly skip over the reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy. If we wait for stronger appeals than those written for our admonition in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, we are faced with one very serious question—from what source will they come?

1. *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 119

2. *Ibid.*, 483-484

3. Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Rugged Heart: The Story of George I. Butler*, Southern Publishing Association, (1979), 14

4. See *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 257-262

5. Vande Vere, 98

6. Letter, G. I. Butler to J. H. Kellogg, June 11, 1905, 6-7 (copy held by author)

7. *Ibid.*, March 7, 1906, 7-8 (copy held by author)

8. See chapter seventeen

9. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 85

10. *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 154

Drury Webster Reavis on Dudley Marvin Canright

D. W Reavis knew D. M. Canright as well as did any worker of the denomination. His account of the once-powerful minister's fall is well worth pondering.

WHATEVER Elder Canright said and wrote in those days [1880s] meant as much to our people as the words of our most prominent leaders do today. But in view of what he has said and written since that time, and because of my intimate association with him, I feel it to be my duty to make a brief statement, with all the love in my heart it is possible for a human being to have for an admired, fallen friend.

I was acquainted with the Canright family during his first marriage, his first wife, who died in the faith, being a close friend of some of my intimate friends, and I felt highly honored by being selected by Elder Canright to do special Sabbath school work in Ohio. This appointment proved to be the beginning of a very close, mutual, friendly association.

Elder Canright talked freely with me about everything in which he was interested, about his personal difficulties, about his past trials and sorrows, and of his future hopes and plans. He seemed to find consolation in going over these things with me. He evidently felt that while I sympa-

thetically listened, I would not repeat. Not until the present have I made any public statement of the facts I am now to state, and these are given not to condemn him, but if possible, to save others even as strong as he from the pitfall into which he fell.

His estrangement began and developed through harboring that greatest seductive thing that finds its way into some human hearts, which I name an abnormal desire to be great, not great in the true meaning of the word, but great only in the estimation of people—to be popular.

The elder was remarkably bright, and grew rapidly from his humble beginning, through the blessing of God and the power of the message he proclaimed with Heaven-bestowed ability. He was so greatly admired and openly praised by our workers and the laity, that he finally reached the conclusion he had inherent ability—that the message he was proclaiming was a hindrance to him rather than the exclusive source of his power. He gradually grew sensitive and resentful, and when reproof came through the Testimonies, he re-

jected it, and finally gave up everything and began warring against the Spirit of Prophecy and the message which had made him all he was.

During the summer and fall of 1880, immediately after graduation, I, with other students from Battle Creek College, attended Professor Hamill's School of Oratory in Chicago. Elder Canright, inoculated at heart with a belief that through a thorough study in, and mastery of, expression he could accomplish his consuming desire to be a popular public speaker, joined us; and because of my former pleasant association with him, I became his critic as he lectured, upon invitation, through the influence of the School of Oratory, in many of the largest popular churches in Chicago during the summer vacation of the pastors of these churches. In these lectures he applied the oratorical principles taught in the school, and needed a critic versed in these principles, to follow him in his lectures and later point out his misapplications, and of course to compliment him on all that were rightly applied. He had more invitations than he could possibly accept, so he selected those from the largest and most popular churches.

One Sunday night, in the largest church of the West Side, he spoke on "The Saints' Inheritance" to more than 3,000 people, and I took a seat in the gallery directly in front of him, to see every gesture and to hear every tone, form of voice, emphasis, stress, pitch, and all the rest. But that was as far as I got in my part of the service, for he so quickly and eloquently launched into this, his favorite theme, that I, with the entire congregation, became entirely absorbed in

the Biblical facts he was so convincingly presenting. I never thought of anything else until he had finished.

After the benediction I could not get to him for more than half an hour, because of the many people crowding around him, complimenting and thanking him for his masterly discourse. On all sides I could hear people saying it was the most wonderful sermon they had ever heard. I knew it was not the oratorical manner of the delivery, but the Bible truth clearly and feelingly presented, that had appealed to the people—it was the power in that timely message. It made a deep, lasting impression upon my mind. I saw that the power was all in the truth, and not in the speaker.

After a long time we were alone, and we went into a beautiful city park just across the street, which was almost deserted because of the late hour of the night, and sat down to talk the occasion over and for me to deliver my criticisms. But I had none for the elder. I frankly confessed that I became so completely carried away with that soul-inspiring Biblical subject I did not think once of the oratorical rules he was applying in its presentation. Then we sat in silence for some time. Suddenly the elder sprang to his feet and said, "D. W, I believe I could become a great man were it not for our unpopular message."

I made no immediate reply, for I was shocked to hear a great preacher make such a statement; to think of the message, for which I had given up the world, in the estimation of its leading minister, being inferior to, and in the way of, the progress of

men was almost paralyzing. Then I got up and stepped in front of the elder and said with much feeling, "D. M., the message made you all you are, and the day you leave it, you will retrace your steps back to where it found you."

But in his mind the die was evidently cast. The decision had doubtless been secretly made in his mind for some time, but had not before been expressed in words. From that night the elder was not quite the same toward our people and the work at large. He continued as a worker for several years afterward, but was retrograding in power all the time. The feeling that being an Adventist was his principal hindrance increasing as time passed, he finally reached the conclusion that he could achieve his goal of fame through denouncing the unpopular doctrines of the denomination, and he finally worked himself out of the denomination and into his self-imposed task of attempting to "expose" it.

All the years intervening between the time of our Chicago association in 1880, and 1903, I occasionally corresponded with Elder Canright, always attempting to do all in my power to save him from wrecking his life and injuring the cause he had done so much to build up. At times I felt hopeful, but every time my encouragement was smothered in still blacker clouds.

I finally prevailed upon him to attend a general meeting of our workers in Battle Creek in 1903, with the view of meeting many of the old workers and having a heart-to-heart talk together. He was delighted with the reception given him by all the old

workers, and greatly pleased with the cordiality of the new workers. All through the meetings he would laugh with his eyes full of tears. The poor man seemed to exist simultaneously in two distinct parts—uncontrollable joy and relentless grief.

Finally when he came to the Review and Herald office, where I was then working, to tell me good-bye before returning to his home in Grand Rapids, Michigan, we went back in a dark storeroom alone to have a talk, and we spent a long time there in this last personal, heart-to-heart visit. I reminded him of what I had told him years before in Chicago, and he frankly admitted that what I predicted had come to pass, and that he wished the past could be blotted out and that he was back in our work just as he was at the beginning, before any ruinous thoughts of himself had entered his heart.

I tried to get him to say to the workers there assembled just what he had said to me, assuring him that they would be glad to forgive all and to take him back in full confidence. I never heard anyone weep and moan in such deep contrition as that once leading light in our message did. It was heartbreaking even to hear him. He said he wished he could come back to the fold as I suggested, but after long, heartbreaking moans and weeping, he said: "I would be glad to come back, but I can't! It's too late! I am forever gone! Gone!" As he wept on my shoulder, he thanked me for all I had tried to do to save him from that sad hour. He said, "D. W, whatever you do, don't ever fight the message."

After Harbor Springs

THE latter half of July and the first half of August in the summer of 1891 saw a group of Adventist educators gathered near Petosky, Michigan, for the purpose of assessing and improving their efforts in behalf of the church's educational work. It had been seventeen years since Battle Creek College had opened. A session of review and evaluation was in order. But more than that, this teachers' institute proved to be the start of a whole new influence in Adventist education. The time for reform had arrived.

"When the precious light of righteousness by faith was breaking...there was held at Harbor Springs...the first general gathering of Seventh-day Adventist teachers for the purpose of studying Christian education.

'At that time the words Christian Education were unknown.... The meeting was a remarkable one, and the definite beginnings of the work of an educational reformatory movement owe their birth to this gathering. In those days the subjects of reform which were for the most part studied and discussed were the elimination of pagan and infidel authors from our schools, the dropping out of long courses in the Latin and Greek classics and the substitution of the teaching of the Bible, and the teaching of history from the standpoint of the prophecies.

"Sister White was present, and I remember well that she read Testimonies relative to our schools and their work which she had written at the time of the conception of our first college. Elder A. T Jones, Professor W. W. Prescott, and Elder E. J. Waggoner were among the leading instructors. This gathering closed with a song of triumph."

And thus the good work began—or perhaps we should say began again. True enough, Seventh-day Adventists had begun their educational work as reformers long before. But there were deficiencies from its very inception. Despite instruction from the pen of Ellen White published under the title "Proper Education" in 1872, Battle Creek College began life handicapped by the shortsighted decision to build on seven acres in the west end of town. James and Ellen White had strongly advocated larger parcels of property, but the decision for "economy" and "convenience" won the votes during their absence. Upon their return to Michigan in the fall of 1874, Ellen White "broke down and wept." Still, though she may weep, she would not give up.

"Shortly after their return, a meeting of the school board was called, and Professor Sidney Brownsberger [acting president of the college] was present.

Then Mrs. White read to them the Testimony on proper education. All listened with deep interest. They recognized it as timely. They also admitted that it called for a broader work than they had planned, and that their beautiful location, so convenient and near, did not provide for all that was called for.

"One said, 'Well, Brother Brownsberger, what can we do?'

"He answered, 'I do not know anything about the conducting of such a school, where industries and farming are a part of the work. I would not know how to conduct such a school.'

"Then it was agreed that the work of the school should be organized on the ordinary lines and that the matter of industries should be studied with a view to their [later] introduction."³

Brownsberger—sincere, honest, the product of a classical education from the University of Michigan—was simply unable to grasp the kind of education the Lord desired. Years later he would exclaim, "What a young fool I then was!"

Time passed. Students came and went. And the college bounced along through good times and bad. The entire school year of 1882-1883 was lost when the institution was forced to close its doors because of internal strife and outside interference from unconverted elements of the local church membership. Industrial education was eventually given a halfhearted opportunity in 1884, with the organizing of an employment office to co-ordinate student workers and odd jobs around town. Later that year a far-from-successful four-and-a-half-year experiment with printing, tentmaking, millinery, and cooking was initiated. By the spring of 1889, the manual training program was voted out of existence; after all, what could be done on seven acres?

Battle Creek Curricula

The 1890-1891 *Catalogue* shows the tenor of Adventist education at the time. Four curricula were offered: the classical (seven years), the scientific (six years), the academic (four years), and the English (three years). Each curriculum offered only two courses in religion—Old Testament and New Testament. The classical student studied Latin and Greek for three years each. The scientific course called for four years of Latin and two of Greek. No doubt these courses were the targets of Ellen White and others as they championed a Christian curriculum free of pagan and infidel authors. What point was there, they asked, in students spending their time translating the works of Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Caesar, Cicero, Seneca, Xenophon, Demosthenes, and Homer? Wouldn't they get at least as much benefit from a study of Scripture?

Well it was, then, that the educators at Harbor Springs spent their time discussing "the elimination of pagan and infidel authors from our schools, the dropping out of long courses in the Latin and Greek classics and the substitution of the teaching of the Bible, and the teaching of history from the standpoint of the prophecies." And well, too, that Sister White "read Testimonies relative to our schools and their work which she had written at the time of the conception of our first college." Indeed, it was worth the effort, for when

Sister White re-read her essay on Proper Education one more time, a few at least were listening. And the seed of reform was planted.

To those who pondered the words they heard from Ellen White shortly before she left for Australia, it was obvious that Adventist education needed to get back on track. But what could be done?

The Great International Football Game

"With the industries abandoned and domestic labor limited to one hour a day, a restless yearning for sports developed. During the winter, skating, sledding, or sleighing occupied student time....

"The men [students] played seasonal ball games on the playfield located north of the college or on the tennis slab on the southwest corner of the campus. College students played some games against teams from the West End [of Battle Creek], a few even against other colleges in Michigan. Once unusual excitement flared (in 1893) over an intramural football game. An American team played against a British team. The British won. A reporter depicted the 'Great International Football Game' in a local journal. One of the Britishers sent a copy of the paper to his parents in Australia; they lent the newspaper to Ellen G. White, who was there (1891-1900) struggling to get the denomination established on the great island continent. She was aghast that so frothy an item should originate from a denominational college."⁴

As might be expected, Ellen White felt compelled to raise a warning. Things were clearly getting out of hand. In due time a frank letter arrived on the desk of W W. Prescott, president of the college:

"There is great danger that parents and guardians, both by words and actions, will encourage self-esteem and self-importance in the youth. They pursue a course of petting, gratifying every whim, and thus foster the desire for self-gratification so that the youth receive a mold of character that unfits them for the commonplace duties of practical life. When these students come to our schools, they do not appreciate their privileges; they do not consider that the purpose of education is to qualify them for usefulness in this life and for the future life in the kingdom of God. They act as if the school were a place to perfect themselves in sports, as if this was an important branch of their education, and they come armed and equipped for this kind of training. This is all wrong, from beginning to end. It is not in any way appropriate for this time, it is not qualifying the youth to go forth as missionaries, to endure hardship and privation, and to use their powers for the glory of God.

"Amusement that serves as exercise and recreation is not to be discarded; nevertheless it must be kept strictly within bounds, else it leads to love of amusement for its own sake, and nourishes the desire for selfish gratification....

"Let all learn to save, to economize. Every dollar wasted on frivolous things, or given to special friends who will spend it to indulge pride and selfishness, is robbing God's treasury.

"The training and discipline you undergo in order to be successful in your games is not fitting you to become faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, to fight His

battles and gain spiritual victories. The money expended for garments to make a pleasing show in these match games is so much money that might have been used to advance the cause of God in new places, bringing the word of truth to souls in darkness of error. Oh, that God would give all the true sense of what it means to be a Christian! It is to be Christlike. He lived not to please Himself....

'A great mistake has been made in following the world's plans and ideas of recreation in indulgence and pleasure-loving. This has resulted in loss every time. *We need now to begin over again. It may be essential to lay the foundation of schools after the pattern of the schools of the prophets.*'"

As was often the case, Ellen White's perception of the event went far deeper than the "rightness" or "wrongness" of some particular action and dealt with the basic principles involved. What was the long-range effect these amusements were exerting? Could an Adventist college conscientiously foster that which the Lord said was disqualifying their youth from filling the positions He had called them to?

"Educational reform" was becoming more desirable all the time. The responsible brethren pondered the status of the educational work. That problems existed was obvious; but what could be done? And how to do it? It was perplexing. But the Lord had His answer prepared; a demonstration was on the way.

In 1893 Ellen White had said, "We need now to begin over again." Three years later she would act on the suggestion herself. Taking out a personal loan of five thousand dollars she inaugurated a fundraising drive for what was to become Avondale College. She was most definitely beginning over again. And if we may judge by the nature of the curriculum, we can assume that she did indeed find it "essential to lay the foundation of schools after the pattern of the schools of the prophets." She explained: "In the night season some things were opened before me in reference to the work and the school that will soon be opened in this locality. The light given me was that we must not pattern after the similitude of any school that has been established in the past.... Unless we are guarded, we shall experience those hindrances to the spiritual education that have retarded the work of our schools in America by misapplication and miscalculation of the work most essential."⁶

The brethren in America watched. Their turn was coming soon.

1897 Reform Movement

By 1897 the frustration in Battle Creek, coupled with articles in the *Review* describing the innovative work being done in Australia, demanded some form of action. But where was the man to put life into the theory? J. H. Kellogg, A. I. Jones, and others were championing the cause of educational reform. W. W. Prescott, now Educational Secretary for the General Conference, returned from a world tour in January. Seeing Avondale firsthand and talking with Ellen White had impressed him, and he joined the pro-reform forces building in Battle Creek. But the key post, president of the college, was held

by George W Caviness, and he was far too conservative-minded and slow to act for the liking of many.

The General Conference session of 1897 was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, that spring and was immediately followed by a number of formal meetings held in Battle Creek to conduct the legal business of Michigan-based denominational corporations. Among these was the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society; here was to be the scene of the real activity that would decide the future course of Battle Creek College. When the Society met to elect its trustees, the nominees suggested by the college board were voted down. Instead, Caviness and two of his supporters held sway, assuring that the classical form of education would be well supported at the level where votes really counted.

What had happened? William Aul, mathematics teacher at the college and Caviness loyalist, had garnered enough proxy votes to successfully tip the decision. Not inclined to accept defeat so easily, the reformers publicly upbraided the resistance movement, declaring the election null and void because of vote-rigging. Jones expounded on the "Principles of True Education" from the pulpit of the Dime Tabernacle, castigating textbooks from the college which contained anti-Christian sentiments, and calling for the removal from office of all who permitted their use.

When a second election was held there were no surprises. Now in full control of the board, the reformers acted quickly on the single most pressing problem; Edward A. Sutherland was elected president of the college, effective immediately. His record of reform-minded education at Walla Walla College had convinced the board that he was the man to implement the new program.'

The Sutherland Administration

The board was right. Changes came thick and fast—but never fast enough for the new administration. As a dramatic symbol of the school's break with the past, Ed Sutherland, Percy Magan, and Justus Lamson plowed up the playfield to the north of campus and planted a crop of potatoes. Had not the Lord called for a practical education? What could be more practical than food?

Ellen White wrote to Sutherland: "If one third of the time now occupied in the study of books, using the mental machinery, were occupied in learning lessons in regard to the right use of one's own physical powers, it would be much more after the Lord's order, and would elevate the labor question, placing it where idleness would be regarded as a departure from the word and plans of God....

"There is a science in the use of the hand. In the cultivation of the soil, in building houses, in studying and planning various methods of labor, the brain must be exercised; and students can apply themselves to study to much better purpose when a portion of their time is adopted to physical taxation, wearying the muscles."⁸

With such counsel in mind, Sutherland and his associates planned for the inclusion of a manual-training program in the college's curriculum. Buying eighty acres a mile north of the campus opened the door for agriculture and provided employment opportunity for scores of students. A broom-making factory, printshop, and tailor shop all posted financial profits in 1899, which more than offset the two-hundred-dollar loss from the dressmaking department. Still, the unfavorable location of the school continued to plague the project.

Despite inconveniences from mistakes of the past, there was pressing work to accomplish. With the groundwork of reform laid in place, it was time to provide educational opportunities for the younger members of the Lord's household. Writing from Australia, Ellen White began to advocate the establishment of elementary-level church schools:

"In all our churches there should be schools, and teachers in those schools who are missionaries. It is essential that teachers be educated to act their important part in educating the children of Sabbathkeepers, not only in the sciences, but in the Scriptures. These schools established in different localities, and conducted by God-fearing men and women, as the case demands, should be built upon the same principles as were the schools of the prophets."⁹

"In America you can build three schoolhouses cheaper than we can build one in this country. It is a grievous offense to God that there has been so great neglect to make provision for the improvement of the children and youth when Providence has so abundantly supplied us with facilities with which to work."¹⁰

In 1890 there were only nine Adventist elementary schools of which record remains. Five years later there had been a one hundred percent increase, but still there were only eighteen worldwide. In 1897, Sutherland and the staff at Battle Creek set out to change what they saw as a "grievous offense." By God's grace, they would see the youth of this church educated by reform-minded, missionary-spirited Christian teachers.

By every means at their command they set out to accomplish the work before them. Through the pages of the *Review and Herald*, through countless sermons delivered on every suitable occasion, in special summer institutes, Sutherland, Magan, and their colleagues spread the vision of proper education for the church's younger members. By 1900 the results were visible. Though Battle Creek College could not claim to have trained every teacher presiding over the lambs of the flock, there were now fully two hundred twenty denominational elementary schools in successful operation. For the five years from 1895 to 1900, this figure represented a more than two thousand percent increase.¹¹

But real success is seldom measured so easily. Can we judge the good done by those earnest souls of years gone by? That souls were saved, we may be sure. But can we form any just conception of the effort put forth, and the victories gained?

Early Adventist Elementary Schools

In 1931 Arthur W Spalding wrote of the tendency on the part of some to belittle the accomplishments of what was already a rapidly receding era. Spalding knew Adventist education as few men of his time knew it, and felt a responsibility to speak up. Writing in the *Review and Herald*, he offered his thoughts to the church.

"Yesterday a friend old enough to have memories of thirty years remarked in my hearing, 'Those first church schools were the greatest examples of nothing I ever saw.' 'Yes,' said another, 'they had no plan, no methods, no facilities, no anything. They just drifted along, trying to teach everything from the Bible.'

"That is not the first time I have heard such or similar remarks about the early church schools. It is a fad with some, and it seems to be a mania with others, to decry the authors and depreciate the accomplishments of the great educational reform which began among us in 1897. The detractors are either those who stood opposed to the movement at the time, or those who were too far separated in place or spirit or age to form any correct estimate of its results.

"It would be a serious error to allow the younger generation to form a picture of the character of our early elementary church schools as being crude, chaotic, fanatical, and fruitless. Not only would that do injustice to the clear-sighted, courageous, and devoted men and women who gave themselves without stint to the establishment of that great work; it would cast under contempt principles and incentives which are vital to the success of our work today....

"I sat in the chapel of Battle Creek College thirty-three years ago this fall, and heard the president call for volunteers from among the students to go out and teach the children in the first churches that had called for schools.

"There were not many volunteers. It meant the giving up of a cherished college course, at least for a time; it meant going out into a new and untried work—not the mere teaching of a primary school, for that was a common enough experience, but the establishment of a new educational work with a purpose and a standard which had leaped beyond the support of textbooks and tried methods; it meant the working out of a new educational system, under pioneer conditions and in the face of strong prejudice within the church. For there were not many yet convinced of the necessity of a church-school system, and there were many convinced of its folly.

" 'Tried to teach everything from the Bible.' Well, yes, she did! Let the damning accusation stand. There were then no *True Education Readers*, nor even the earlier *Bible Reader*. She taught them to read from the Bible and from sentences she wrote on the blackboard. And somehow they came to be good readers, and the Bible did not seem to hurt them. And they learned to spell 'Methuselah' and 'Maher-shalal-hash-baz' and 'promise' and 'sacrifice' and 'faith' and 'obedience.' And the copy she set for them for penmanship was more likely 'Honor thy father and thy mother' than 'All good men should come to the aid of their party.'

"They had a textbook in arithmetic, but some of the examples were far from exemplary, and this teacher, somehow, could see no objection to substituting, sometimes, a measurement of Noah's ark, with a computation of its cubical content, or a little arithmetical excursion into the New Jerusalem. She may have been frightfully unscientific, but she managed to create a varied interest in the Book of books....

"A physiology textbook they had, too, but that church school found not only information but authority and power in the first chapter of Genesis, and the tenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the second chapter of Second Timothy.... I suspect those children could pass as good an examination in anatomy as any modern school child; but more than that, they made themselves masters of their appetites, even in the face of ridicule and opposition from some of the parents. Certain teachings in diet may even have been extreme, though in accord with the science of that day, but no man can gainsay the moral power generated by the willing endurance of thirst and the discipline of the palate....

"It was out of the experience of that schoolroom and its sister schoolrooms, out of the thought and invention and experiment of that teacher and her fellow teachers, that the first Adventist elementary textbooks were formed. Doubtless they were poor specimens: they were not illustrated in colors, and they had not had the benefit of criticism and years of test. But for that matter I have never seen a perfect textbook anywhere yet. Despire not the day of beginnings."¹²

And with that we may close our reflection on the events that sprang from the meeting at Harbor Springs. We may well respect those who braved their way through the difficult times of the last century, paving the way for the advantages we enjoy. But can it stop there? Dare we fail to learn the most vital of all lessons that may be drawn from this experience?

Our educational work today faces challenges fully as serious as those faced by our spiritual forebears of a century past. Yet we need not be despondent; the Lord has promised divine aid for every such emergency. But we must not be presumptuous, for this aid is clearly stated to be subject to the wise and loving conditions laid down by the greatest Teacher the world ever knew.

"Though in many respects our institutions of learning have swung into worldly conformity, though step by step they have advanced toward the world, they are prisoners of hope. Fate has not so woven its meshes about their workings that they need to remain helpless and in uncertainty. *If they will listen to His voice and follow in His ways*, God will correct and enlighten them, and bring them back to their upright position of distinction from the world."¹³

We are blessed with material benefits, organizational facilities, and the advantages that come from years of experience; yet it rests with us to ensure that our Lord will not be forced at last to conclude that we yet lack the one thing most essential. *We must listen; we must follow.* The conditions are plain—let every soul who lays claim to the name Seventh-day Adventist ponder them well.

1. Percy T Magan, *Review and Herald*, August 6, 1901 (Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History*, Southern Publishing Association, (1975), 172). See *Selected Messages*, book 3, 231-233 for samples of Ellen White's concerns at these meetings.
2. *Counsels on Education*, introduction, vi, by Arthur L. White
3. Emmett K. Vande Vere, *The Wisdom Seekers*, Southern Publishing Association, (1972), 24
4. *Ibid.*, 62-63
5. Letter 47, 1893, emphasis supplied (portions taken from both *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, 218-219 and *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, 255)
6. *Sermons and Talks*, 278
7. For the best readily available discussion of the struggle for reform in 1897, see Emmett K. Vande Vere, *The Wisdom Seekers*, Southern Publishing Association, (1972), 68-79
8. *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 96-97
9. *Ibid.*, 100
10. *Ibid.*, 103
11. E. M. Cadwallader, *A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education*, Leaves-of-Autumn Books, (1975), 290
12. Arthur W Spalding, *Review and Herald*, January 8, 1931, 8-9 (Cadwallader, 301-303)
13. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 145, emphasis supplied

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

The "Foolishest Nonsense"

GEORGE Butler once observed that "as a people, we have, in many, many places, gotten into some of the foolishest nonsense in religious things and in fanatical ideas that I ever heard of among any people."¹ He had John Kellogg's pantheism in mind as he wrote, but his outlook on such things was indubitably influenced by the wholesale falling away of the entire elected leadership of the Indiana Conference which had occurred barely three years before.

If his assessment of Adventism's collective common sense seems pessimistic, we should bear in mind that even today the holy flesh movement of Indiana is probably the denomination's most notable example of misguided religious enthusiasm. If descriptions of the movement's activities strike us as bizarre, it should come as no real surprise that the movement's theology was foreign to Adventism. Nonetheless, the church was spared the worst. Both Ellen White and historical precedent assure us that one small philosophical step further would have brought cause for far greater shame.

The story revolves most closely around two men, S. S. Davis, and R. S. Donnell. Davis accepted Seventh-day Adventism in 1886, worked as a colporteur for five years, was granted a license to preach in 1893, was ordained in 1895, and was appointed Conference "revivalist" in December, 1899. Biographical information concerning Donnell is less complete. In 1898 he was the president of the Upper Columbia Conference. In April of that year he was asked to serve as president of the Indiana Conference. He accepted the position and took on his new duties about the middle of the year.²

It is uncertain when the theological concepts of the movement began to form in Davis' mind. One account, written in 1923 by an eyewitness of the movement, indicates that "it was reported by some" that Davis traced his thinking back to a series of articles written by Donnell in the *Indiana Reporter*. Regardless of the strength or weakness of this connection, it was apparently convincing to the Conference president. Despite his initial public opposition to Davis and his theology, Donnell is reported to have done a complete about face when Davis "took the articles of R. S. Donnell and showed that he got his ideas from them."³

From that point on, Elder Donnell used his considerable influence to further the work of Davis and his assistants. Under his mentorship the movement blossomed briefly during the summer of 1900. Though we may

assume that adherents of the holy flesh teachings held similar meetings at other times, it is only this one season of camp meetings of which we have any distinct record.

Before moving on to the meetings themselves, however, we should note that there is some evidence for at least one other source of Davis' teachings. Nearly six decades after the fact, Jesse Dunn, the State Agent in charge of Adventist colporteur work in Indiana at the time of the fanaticism, wrote his recollections of the movement. He records that Davis had come into contact with a group of Pentecostals. In Dunn's account, Davis is quoted as saying, "Brother Dunn, they have the 'spirit'; and we have the truth; and if we had the 'spirit' as they have, with the truth, we could do things."⁴

The Muncie Camp Meeting

The most well-reported aspect of the whole movement was the eleven-day camp meeting held at Muncie from September 13-23. The various accounts of these meetings are quite consistent in their descriptions. Stephen Haskell's wife, Hetty, wrote from the camp grounds: "They have a big drum, two tambourines, a big bass fiddle, two small fiddles, a flute, and two cornets, and an organ and a few voices. They have *Garden of Spices* as a song book and play dance tunes to sacred words. They have never used our own hymn books except when Elders Breed or Haskell speak, then they open and close with a hymn from our book, but all the other songs are from the other book. They shout 'Amen' and 'Praise the Lord; 'Glory to God,' just like a Salvation Army service. It is distressing to one's soul. The doctrines preached correspond to the rest. The poor sheep are truly confused."⁵

She wrote again five days later: "Last Sabbath they [the Indiana ministers] took the early meeting [and] also the 11 o'clock hour, and called them front to the altar as they call the little fence they have around the pulpit. The poor sheep came flocking up until they were on the ground three rows deep. The ministers kept up their shouting and, shall I call it yelling. They invited Elder Haskell and Elder Breed to come down to the altar and help. They went down, and Elder Breed got down and tried to talk to some, but he felt so out of place he got up on his feet and stood and looked on. Elder Haskell left the tent and went to our own tent. Finally they had a season of prayer, then they got up and began shouting, 'Praise the Lord; 'Glory; et cetera, falling on one another 's neck and kissing and shaking hands, keeping their music going with the noise, until many of them looked almost crazy."⁶

Elder Haskell's account is similar, but adds a few details of interest: "To describe it, I hardly know what to say. It is beyond all description. I have never seen any company held with a firmer grasp by a certain number of the leading ministers, than they are held in Indiana. Brother R. S. Donnell is president, and they have an experience in getting the people ready for translation. They call it the 'cleansing message.' Others call it the 'holy flesh'; and when I say the 'cleansing message' and the 'holy flesh,' no doubt these terms will bring to your mind experiences that illustrate what we saw....

"There is a great power that goes with the movement that is on foot there. It would almost bring anybody within its scope, if they are at all conscientious, and sit and listen with the least degree of favor, because of the music that is brought to play in the ceremony. They have an organ, one bass viol, three fiddles, two flutes, three tambourines, three horns, and a big bass drum, and perhaps other instruments which I have not mentioned. They are as much trained in their musical line as any Salvation Army choir that you ever heard. In fact, their revival effort is simply a complete copy of the Salvation Army method, and when they get on a high key, you cannot hear a word from the congregation in their singing, nor hear anything, unless it be the shrieks of those who are half insane. I do not think I overdraw it at all."⁷

G. A. Roberts, the author of the 1923 account cited above, was present on the camp grounds. From his slightly different perspective, he saw and heard things which were hidden from the Haskells: "Elder S. N. Haskell was present at this camp meeting and opposed the doctrine strenuously. Some who were in error would refer to him as 'Pap' and to Sister White as 'Mam.' The workers, practically all of whom were involved, would attend the preaching of R. S. Donnell and when Elder Haskell would preach they would seem to have other business to attend to on the camp ground, and many of them would not be present. On one occasion when R. S. Donnell preached, he held his hands out over the congregation and his arms and hands seemed rigid and fixed. After the meeting, he told me and others that during that service he could feel great power course down his arms, passing through his fingers to the congregation."⁸

The selections quoted above are all descriptive of a single camp meeting. This next account is more general, giving a broader picture of the movement: "The followers of this doctrine would gather in the cleared basement of the church, and a large number of them would dance in a large circle, shouting and lifting up their hands. The children would be placed upon boxes or barrels, and they too would shout and lift up their hands. In their church services, they would preach and shout and pray until someone in the congregation would fall unconscious from his seat. One or two men would be walking up and down the aisles watching for just this demonstration, and would lay hold of the person who had fallen, literally dragging him up the aisle and placing him on the rostrum. Then a number, perhaps a dozen, would gather about the prostrate form, some shouting, some singing, and some praying, all at the same time. Finally the individual would revive, and he was then counted among the faithful who had passed through the Garden."⁹

The Theological Base

Aside from the emotional extravaganza of the movement, we should also take some notice of the theological underpinnings which provided the philosophical rationale for this unfortunate fanaticism. Hetty Haskell said that "the doctrines preached correspond to the rest." But what were these doctrines?

The clearest statement comes from Stephen Haskell. While describing to Ellen White the difficulties of his recent experience, Haskell touches briefly on the theology taught: "It is the greatest mixture of fanaticism in the truth that I ever have seen. I would not claim that we managed it the best in everything, and yet I do not know where I made any mistake. We tried to do the very best we could, and had they not have talked against us and misrepresented our position, there would have been no confusion with the people. But when we stated that we believed that Christ was born in fallen humanity, they would represent us as believing that Christ sinned, notwithstanding the fact that we would state our position so clearly that it would seem as though no one could misunderstand us.

"Their point of theology in this particular respect seems to be this: They believe that Christ took Adam's nature before he fell; so He took humanity as it was in the garden of Eden, and thus humanity was holy, and this was the humanity which Christ had; and now, they say, the particular time has come for us to become holy in that sense, and then we will have 'translation faith,' and never die."

Roberts also found their theology significant—and mistaken: "The essential feature of the doctrine was that when Jesus passed through the Garden of Gethsemane, He had an experience which all must have who follow Him. It was taught that Jesus had holy flesh, and that those who followed Him through the garden experience would likewise have holy flesh; that the text 'A body hast thou prepared me,' showed that Christ had a specially prepared holy body. The Scripture, Hebrews 2:7-14, was used to prove that Christ was born with flesh like 'my brethren' and 'the church' would have after they had passed through the garden experience."

All of this may sound rather strange and illogical to us today (indeed, there is no adequate justification for the movement whatsoever), but as with most errors this movement arose from a partial basis of truth. The holy flesh movement, to a small extent, can be explained as an effort to deal with one of the greatest theological hurdles of Adventism. And since this hurdle is still with us today, and since there are those who are still tripping over it, there is plenty of ground for contemplating the matter.

The problem, of course, is the time of Jacob's trouble, the time when the Remnant must stand before a holy God without a Mediator. And as long as Adventist eschatology recognizes that the close of probation and the end of mediation precede glorification, the problem will remain. How are fallen human beings to stand in the sight of a sin-hating God without the benefit of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice and righteousness?

If the close of probation is to be taken seriously, it must be acknowledged that, somehow, the final remnant must be freed of continuing sinfulness. Before the "marriage of the Lamb" is consummated, it must be truly said that "His wife hath made herself ready." She must at last "be arrayed" in nothing but "fine linen, clean and white."¹² As Ellen White has put it, "Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain

upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement."¹³

The Need of New Evidence

There can be no denying that this is a major challenge. The lack of just such an accomplishment, and the consequent lack of the decisive testimony which only such an accomplishment can provide, is the sole logical reason which can be given for God's having allowed the last 2,000 years of sin. This issue lies very near to the heart of Adventist theology. Surrounding it are the issues of the heavenly sanctuary, the process of atonement, and the vindication of the government of Heaven. Thus we have some reason to be charitable in our evaluations of those who wrestled with this issue at the turn of the century.

Once it is recognized that the remnant—those who will finally be translated without seeing death—must be purified of all sin before the second coming, the obvious question is "How?" What influence will at last put an end to the costly delay? What will end the senseless misery of billions of suffering men, women, and children? If the delay is related to the failure of God's people to perfect their characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement, there can be no question that something must change. Something, somehow, must change. Even if it be nothing more than a greater number of "Enochs in this our day," something must change.

At this point it may be proper to pause for a moment and acknowledge that this necessity of change is not accepted by all Christians, nor even by all Seventh-day Adventists. There are many who deny the need of a last-day group who have perfected their characters. In fact it is sometimes asserted that even those who live to see Jesus coming in the clouds will be sinning right up until the moment that mortality puts on immortality and corruption puts on incorruption.

The difficulty with this position is that it robs God of any reasonable explanation for the last nearly 2,000 years of earthly suffering and sorrow. If no demonstration remains to be made, if no new evidence remains to be submitted to the minds of men and unfallen worlds, if all the issues were met and all the questions answered at the cross, then God must bear the responsibility of arbitrarily continuing the expensive—and now pointless—experiment of sin.

S. S. Davis and R. S. Donnell did not follow this school of thought. They believed that God's people must prepare for translation, they must come to be like their Saviour. The real difficulty began with their understanding of Christ. They believed that in His incarnation Jesus was shielded miraculously from the heredity of sinful human nature. Donnell wrote:

"If Christ proposes to restore man to his first estate, he must come to man standing in that estate Himself. He must come standing where Adam, the first owner, stood before he fell.... Christ stood where Adam stood, and Adam

stood there without a taint of sin. So Christ must have stood where Adam stood before his fall—that is, without a taint of sin."¹⁴

Muddled Definitions

For the leaders from Indiana this meant that God's remnant must be freed from sinful flesh. To compound matters, Davis and Donnell equated the terms "flesh," "mind," and "nature." Thus, to be freed from sinful flesh was to be freed from sinful nature. This, then, was the missing ingredient in the plan of salvation. Since they did not believe that anyone with fallen human nature was capable of living without sin, it seemed obvious to them that something miraculous must happen to remove the fallen nature *before* the close of probation, rather than at the time of glorification.

There is a certain amount of logic in their position thus far. Although based on a false premise, they at least made sense with their reasoning. In the effort to supply the needed miracle of removing the fallen nature, however, their logic fell apart rather badly. It was here that Davis' Pentecostal leanings took over. This needed miracle, they proclaimed in all seriousness, occurred when someone fainted dead away in church. To us this may seem a likely result of the protracted excitement of the meetings. To them it was the work of the Holy Spirit.

Following the camp meeting season of 1900, historical records of the movement are almost, if not entirely, nonexistent. We next hear of it at the General Conference session of 1901. The evening of April 16, E. J. Waggoner gave a pointed presentation in which he dealt directly with the question of the nature of Christ in the incarnation. He declared that "the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, the marvel of the ages, the wonder of the angels, that thing which even now they desire to understand, and which they can form no just idea of, only as they are taught it by the church, is the perfect manifestation of the life of God in its spotless purity in the midst of sinful flesh."¹⁵

The next day Ellen White took up the issue: "Instruction has been given me in regard to the late experience of brethren in Indiana and the teaching they have given to the churches....

"The teaching given in regard to what is termed 'holy flesh' is an error. All may now obtain holy hearts, but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh.... To those who have tried so hard to obtain by faith so-called holy flesh, I would say, You cannot obtain it. Not a soul of you has holy flesh now. No human being on the earth has holy flesh. It is an impossibility."

Ellen White split apart what Davis and Donnell had put together. She said: "While we cannot claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul."¹⁶

After citing a number of previous outbreaks of fanaticism she addressed the more general features of the movement: "The manner in which the meetings in Indiana have been carried on, with noise and confusion, does not commend them to thoughtful, intelligent minds. There is nothing in these demonstrations which will convince the world that we have the

truth. Mere noise and shouting are no evidence of sanctification, or of the descent of the Holy Spirit. Your wild demonstrations create only disgust in the minds of unbelievers. The fewer of such demonstrations there are, the better it will be."¹⁷

In the next two days six of the principle actors in the movement came forward before the assembled delegates of the General Conference and made confession of their error. The entire membership of the Indiana Conference Committee resigned their positions, and a new committee was chosen by the church membership of the Indiana Conference at a specially-called constituency meeting held the first week of May.

And thus the movement came to its end. For the present, however, there remain at least two more aspects of this experience which deserve our consideration. Perhaps the most important of the two is Ellen White's indication that a movement similar to that occurring in Indiana had been shown to her as coming into Adventism "just before the close of probation."¹⁸ This issue will be reserved for discussion in chapter forty-two.

Pollution of Body, Soul, and Spirit

The other item of interest is a prediction made by Ellen White at the 1901 General Conference session. While addressing the holy flesh teaching, she said: "In showing the fallacy of their assumptions in regard to holy flesh, the Lord is seeking to prevent men and women from putting on His words a construction which leads to pollution of body, soul, and spirit. Let this phase of doctrine be carried a little further, and it will lead to the claim that its advocates cannot sin: that since they have holy flesh, their actions are all holy. What a door of temptation would thus be opened!"¹⁹

Without belittling the prophetic office in any way, a prediction such as this can confidently be made by anyone with even a passing knowledge of human nature and the ability to reason logically. Yet it has been a stumbling stone time after time, and there are those within Adventism who have fallen on this point in recent years.

No matter what the rationale which leads one to discount the possibility of his own error, sensuality will always be the result if the movement has opportunity to develop fully. Whether one believes that he *cannot* sin because he has "gone through the garden" (as they did in Indiana), or believes that he can with absolute confidence assert that he *will not* sin (as did the adherents of the "Lord Our Righteousness" movement in the late 1980s), the end is the same.

Simply put, it works like this. When a person adopts and advocates a system of theology which "guarantees" personal victory, he puts himself in a most precarious position. Once he has announced his new and apparently desirable attainment, he is under the burden of living up to his own pronouncement. In a certain sense this is no different from any sincere Christian who accepts the binding nature of God's law. Both recognize the duty of obedience, but there is yet a world of distinction. Though the Christian seeks to render full obedience to every requirement of the law, he

recognizes, too, that the Scriptures give no grounds for confidence in himself. He is ever distrustful of himself, and has learned from experience that God will not violate His subjects' choice of righteousness or unrighteousness. It is this latter fact which has been ignored by those advocating the mistaken "holiness" theories.

Once a person has taken the ground that he cannot sin (or "knows that he will not"), he can retain a sense of sincerity only so long as he hears no convicting voice of conscience. But the spiritual pride and self-confidence which such theories breed is guarantee enough that these persons will definitely sin. What makes these theories the more deceptive is that their advocates' will power usually enables them to avoid the more glaring and obvious sins. This not only increases their ability to deceive others, but makes their own deception all the more sure as well, for their slide away from true obedience and holiness is more gradual.

Because thoughts almost always precede actions, it is usually in the mind that the sensuality inherent in false teachings of exalted holiness first appears. The devil is a master at injecting evil thoughts into our minds. We need not retain such thoughts, of course, and the mere fact that the devil can introduce sinful thoughts into our minds does not bring guilt to the soul. Still, for one whose false beliefs have produced a spirit of proud self-confidence, there is but little strength of resistance to draw on. Eventually the devil's thoughts will find some degree of reception. Most often it will be in the realm of sensual gratification simply because this is without doubt one of humanity's weakest points. The thought is toyed with; the "pleasures of sin" are dwelt upon for a time. And then comes the decisive moment.

All who have traveled this road have at some point been confronted with the discrepancy between their thoughts and the law of God. What conscience they still retain is aroused. But the devil is ready for this to happen—indeed he has no doubt been waiting for it, for just now is his opportunity.

A person who believes he cannot sin is confronted with a great perplexity when his conscience condemns him. He must either accept the condemnation as just and abandon his theory, or he must somehow silence his conscience. The one is humiliating; the other requires a major reinterpretation of Scripture. Too often the latter option seems most inviting. In fact, since the person's "sinlessness" is unquestionable in his own mind, simple logic makes it obvious that what he has all his life *thought* to be sinful, must actually be within the bounds of righteousness. There is no other explanation. Simply put, a sinless man would never think sinful thoughts. Therefore his thoughts must be holy. And if the thought of taking another man's wife for himself is holy, then surely the act could be no worse.

Or so the reasoning goes. Fortunately the church was spared such disgrace in 1900. But whenever feeling or false theory is made the basis of determining one's "holiness," the tendency toward sensuality will surely exist. It is a trap of the devil well worth avoiding.

1. Letter, George I. Butler to Ellen G. White, December 7, 1903, (Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Rugged Heart: The Story of George I. Butler*, Southern Publishing Association, (1979), 117
2. W H. Grotheer, *The Holy Flesh Movement*, Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Mississippi, (1973), 8, 50-52
3. G. A. Roberts, "The Holy Flesh Fanaticism," manuscript in E. G. White Estate Document File 190, 1, 3
4. Grotheer, 7
5. Letter, Hetty Haskell to Sara McInterfer, September 17, 1900
6. Letter, Hetty Haskell to Ellen G. White, September 22, 1900
7. Letter, Stephen Haskell to Ellen G. White, September 25, 1900
8. Roberts, 3
9. *Ibid.*, 2
10. Letter, Stephen Haskell to Ellen G. White, September 25, 1900
11. Roberts, 1
12. Revelation 19:7-8
13. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 214
14. R. S. Donnell, *What I Taught in Indiana*, (n.d.), 4 (A tract containing articles which had originally been published in the *Indiana Reporter* during Donnell's presidency of the Indiana Conference.)
15. 1901 *General Conference Bulletin*, 404
16. *Ibid.*, 419
17. *Ibid.*, 421
18. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 36
19. 1901 *General Conference Bulletin*, 419

S. G. Huntington on "The Son of Man"

Elder S. G. Huntington was one of the relatively few ministers of the Indiana Conference to actively oppose the teaching of the "holy flesh" doctrine. The Mission Press, of La Fayette, Indiana, printed a sixteen-page tract Huntington wrote, entitled The Son of Man. Published about the time the fanaticism reached its height, the tract deals with the basic theological errors of the movement. Though Huntington is perhaps too sweeping in some of his assertions, the following extracts provide interesting testimony as to the doctrinal basis of the holy flesh movement. All indications of special emphasis are copied from the original.

BUT when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4:4-5

When Adam in his innocency lived in Eden he was free from sin, and in harmony with the law But in yielding to temptation he sinned, and sin being the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), fell under its condemnation. And not only Adam, alone, fell under the condemnation of the law by his transgression, but all his posterity as well: for, "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12.

Adam's transgression branded both himself and all his posterity as sinners, and subject to death. All were under the law, i.e., under sin.

Romans 3:9. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so, by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Romans 5:18. Jesus was made under the law. He was MADE just like those who were ALREADY under the law. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus was *made* under the law. He makes us the righteousness of God in Him. Here are TWO MAKINGS—one under the law, the other in harmony with the law; therefore, as is agreed, when He makes us the righteousness of God in Him we become like Him in righteousness; then is it not also a fact that when He was made under the law, and to be sin for us, He was made just like us, and of the same nature and propensity as we?

Man came under the condemnation of the law through his own transgression; Jesus did not, for He never transgressed: yet in order to rescue those who by transgression were under the law, He, too, must be made under the law. Then, with His long human arm encircling humanity and His divine arm the throne of God, He is able to lift those who are under the law up in harmony with the law, and make them sons and daughters of God.

Thus we read: "Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the *level of those He wished to save*. In Him was no guile or sinfulness. He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him *our sinful nature*, clothing His divinity with humanity that He might associate with fallen humanity. He sought to regain for man that which by disobedience Adam had lost for himself and the world."—*Review and Herald*, December 15, 1896

"For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the *seed of Abraham*. Wherefore in *all things* it behoved Him to be *made* like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Hebrews 2:16-18....

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." Romans 8:3. That this text certifies that Jesus took sinful flesh is evident

(1st), as we have learned, He was made "under the law." Galatians 4:4. (2nd) He was made to be sin for us. 2 Corinthians 5:21. (3rd) He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. 1 Peter 2:24; and (4th) the text plainly states that He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Now a likeness is just like the thing itself.

Thus, in Genesis 1:26-27, we read: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.... So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him."

This was in the beginning; and just as man was made in the likeness of God then and reflected both spiritually and physically the image of his Creator, so after that likeness was marred through the fall and man became sinful, and that God might rescue him from his sinful condition, God sent forth His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. The likeness the first time was after God, the second time after fallen man; therefore, just as man when made in the likeness of God in the beginning possessed the very nature and attributes of God, so when Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh He, too, partook of the nature of His pattern, after the flesh, clothed His divinity with humanity, subjected Himself to all the hereditary tendencies and inclinations of sinful flesh, and was in every whit just like all other men of Adam's posterity.

The same thought is also found in Philippians 2:7. Here the apostle again states that Christ was made in the likeness of men. He not only looked like a man, but He was a man.

To those who teach that a likeness, as brought to view in the above texts, is only a *duplicate* in looks and not in reality, I want to inquire upon what authority they teach the diabolical nature of the Image to the Beast? Now an image is only a likeness as is plainly shown in Genesis 1:26. The Beast is in Europe; the Image is to be set up in this country: but if the Image is only to *look like*, or just outwardly and in some harmless way *have the appearance* of the Beast, and *not the very nature* of the Beast, then why fear the Image or have any fearful forebodings of the treatment of the church?

The facts are: if that position were true, then all the evils and persecutions, of which the Revelator has spoken and accredited to the Image as bringing upon the remnant and commandment-keeping church, prove a hoax, and the popular doctrine of America's conversion true. Consistency, 0 consistency, thou art a jewel.

But some may inquire: If Jesus had sinful flesh did He not sin? No; there is the beauty of His life—He condemned sin in the flesh, and brought every member, thought, and desire into subjection to the will of God. Not for an instant did He yield to the wooings of the flesh, Satan, or the world, but lived a sinless and spotless life. And the pure, spotless life He lived in sinful flesh *then*, He will live in our sinful flesh now if we will but give Him the opportunity.

"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (our flesh, which is sinful flesh) is of God." 1 John 4:2. Sinful flesh is the

only kind of flesh we have to present for Him to come into, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23.

Says the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh (sinful flesh, for it is the only kind poor fallen man has), I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20....

In adopting the theory of sinless flesh, though its advocates have ever been loathe to admit it, they are nevertheless unconsciously led into the papal error of the Immaculate Conception and other heresies of the Catholic church. The theory of sinless flesh is pre-eminently papal—the foundation upon which the Catholic church stands. Remove this, and the whole structure of the papacy, as a religion, falls to the ground.

The expression "sinless flesh" is nowhere found in the Bible: then why adopt such an expression? It is equally as inconsistent as to speak of Sunday as the "Christian Sabbath"; the "soul" as immortal; the "second death" as eternal torment; "baptism" as sprinkling, etc., etc. The record says that Christ was "made in the likeness of sinful flesh." Romans 8:3. "Of the seed of David." Romans 1:3. "Of the seed of Abraham." Hebrews 2:16. Then let us believe that it was just that way without trying to spiritualize these plain declarations to suit a perverted fancy, and by so doing entangle ourselves in an inextricable web of inconsistencies....

Now, since we have been studying the humanity of Christ, let

none think we would detract from or forget His *Divinity*. Although Jesus "the sinbearer endured the wrath of divine justice, and *for our sakes* became SIN ITSELF," (The *Desire of Ages*, 756), yet, through His implicit faith in His Father, He was fortified so that His divine nature overwhelmingly triumphed over His sinful nature and hereditary tendencies. Thus from the cradle to Calvary, His days of trial and probation, He lived a pure, holy, and sinless life. Thus He met the demands of a broken law, and became

"the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Now just as God in Christ, four thousand years this side of Creation, lived a perfect, spotless life in sinful flesh, so through faith in Him, He will cleanse us from all our unrighteousness, impart to us His own righteousness, take up His abode in our hearts, and live the same kind of life in our sinful flesh six thousand years this side of Creation. Then we can truly say, "as He is (in character) so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

A Time of Change

IT was a new century, barely tarnished by the mistakes of men, and change was in the air. While the rank and file of church membership were probably unaware of it, change was coming soon to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well. And there was cause for change, more than enough.

The decade of the 1890s had been difficult for God's church. Ellen White spent the time in the countries of New Zealand and Australia, far removed from Battle Creek, the "heart of the work." Despite voluminous counsel from her pen, the situation had deteriorated badly.' At last the prophet had received instruction from the Lord that it was time to return to her native land. Her natural joy at the prospect of renewing old acquaintances was dampened, however, by the realization that this new assignment meant—not the opportunity for undisturbed writing which she so much desired—but hard work.

Nevertheless, the back page of the *Review and Herald* soon carried the telegraphed message, "San Francisco, California, September 21, 1900—Sister White and party arrived this morning in good condition." Change was on the way.

The developments of the next few years have found their place in our denomination's history, but the assessments of what happened during that time *are* far from unanimous. The events of the 1901 General Conference session have been hailed by some as the successful resolution of thirteen years of crisis stemming from the Minneapolis conference of 1888.² Others, however, identify the outcome of the 1903 General Conference session as the final point of no return at which the denomination ceased to be the Lord's chosen. In any *case*, it was clearly a time of change, and it behooves us to seek to understand the Lord's leading and instruction through it all.

Though several issues demanded attention as the General Conference convened in April of 1901, the claims of a would-be prophet and even the disturbances caused by the "holy flesh" teachings promulgated in Indiana were to take a back seat. The overriding concern was undoubtedly "reorganization." But what did it mean? What was to be reorganized? Who was to decide? What was the new organization to be patterned after? And, for that matter, what was wrong with the existing organization which the Lord had used in the past?

Pre-session Consultations

Delegates wanted to know in advance; and preliminary meetings—formal and informal alike—held out the only good hope of beginning the session with

their feet firmly on the ground. But the words spoken seemed hollow, the ideas put forth too vague. Everyone recognized that the moving force behind reorganization was the seventy-three-year-old lady from Elmshaven. What others would say might be important, but whether her agenda would fail or succeed, there was no denying that she would do the most to set the tone of the meetings. And so an unofficial meeting was scheduled for Monday afternoon, April first, in the library of Battle Creek College. Word spread quickly that Ellen White would be present, and the room was packed. For the sake of posterity there was not just one, but two, stenographers to record the event.

When invited to speak, Ellen White responded, "I did not expect to lead out in this meeting. I thought I would let you [Elder A. G. Daniells] lead out, and then if I had anything to say, I would say it." Daniells probably spoke for most of those gathered when he said, "We had said about as much as we wished to until we heard from you."³

Rising to her feet, Ellen White gave the impromptu address entitled "Kingly Power," now found in *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 162-174. She lamented that "the state of things as has existed in our Conference" was "not nearly understood." The work was circumscribed, narrowed down by the controlling influence of "a few minds" which were "considered of sufficient wisdom and power to control and mark out plans" for the worldwide work of the church.

'And in reference to our Conference, it is repeated o'er and o'er and o'er again, that it is the voice of God, and therefore everything must be referred to the Conference and have the Conference voice in regard to permission or restriction or what shall be and what shall not be done in the various fields."

Rather than making an attack on men who had by all accounts failed to meet God's will, she excused them as far as possible ("not that anyone is wrong or means to be wrong"), but was unrelenting in her condemnation of "a management which is getting confused in itself" and "the principles which have become so mixed and so fallen from what God's principles are."

She called for "the taking in of other minds," asserting that "God wants a change, and it is high time, it is high time that there was ability that should connect with the...General Conference."

She spoke of proper representation of the interests of the church: "Now this is what they want and you want, that every institution that bears a responsibility, bears a voice in the working of this cause."

Speaking of the need for responsible men who would "stand just as true as the compass to the pole," she pointed out that "God will test these men, and unless they can show a better idea of what principle is, what sanctified and living and Christlike principle is, then they will have to be changed and try another." But that was for the future. As for the present, "God is going to have a change."

Near the close of her presentation she took time to dwell on the importance of the medical missionary work of the church. Tensions had been building for some years already between the medical and ministerial branches of Advent-

ist endeavor. Because one of her fondest desires was to see these two powerful agencies for good working harmoniously together, she took time to recount the Lord's endorsement of Dr. Kellogg. By so doing, she no doubt hoped to stem the tide of distrust rising against him in the minds and hearts of many.

In conclusion, as she often did, the prophet of the Lord pointed her hearers to the Bible, encouraging especially that its teachings be carried "right out in your life."

1901 General Conference

The following morning, April 2, 1901, the General Conference session began in earnest. After completing the roll call of delegates, and having presented his formal address to those assembled, Elder G. A. Irwin, the president of the General Conference, opened the floor for the transaction of business. Sister White came forward and delivered the second of her most memorable calls for reorganization (preserved for us in the 1901 *General Conference Bulletin*, 23-27).

"I feel a special interest in the movements and decisions that shall be made at this Conference regarding the things that should have been done years ago, and especially ten years ago, when we were assembled in Conference, and the Spirit and power of God came into our meeting, testifying that God was ready to work for this people if they would come into working order. The brethren assented to the light God had given, but there were those connected with our institutions, especially with the Review and Herald Office and the Conference, who brought in elements of unbelief, so that the light that was given was not acted upon. It was assented to, but no special change was made to bring about such a condition of things that the power of God could be revealed among His people....

"Year after year the same acknowledgment was made, but the principles which exalt a people were not woven into the work. God gave them clear light as to what they should do, and what they should not do, but they departed from that light, and it is a marvel to me that we stand in as much prosperity as we do today. It is because of the great mercy of our God, not because of our righteousness, but that His name should not be dishonored in the world."

It is interesting to note the practical aspects of Christian living which Ellen White pointed to as sources of concern. It was not embezzlement, or adultery, or murder which called for reorganization—it was the simple lack of conversion: "The men who have woven their own human passions into life and character, who have nurtured self all the way along, are not to think that they are qualified to deal with human minds. God wants every person to begin at home, and there live the Christ-life. In the church and in every business transaction, a man will be just what he is in his home....

"You have no right to manage, unless you manage in God's order. Are you under the control of God? Do you see your responsibility to Him?..."

"Oh, my very soul is drawn out in these things! Men who have not learned to submit themselves to the control and discipline of God are not competent to train the youth, to deal with human minds. It is just as much an impossibility for them to do this work as it would be for them to make a world. That these men should stand in a sacred place, to be as the voice of God to the people, as we once believed the General Conference to be—that is past. What we want now is a reorganization. We want to begin at the foundation, and to build upon a different principle....

"According to the light that has been given me—and just how it is to be accomplished I cannot say—greater strength must be brought into the managing force of the Conference. But this will not be done by entrusting responsibilities to men who have had light poured upon them year after year for the last ten or fifteen years, and yet have not heeded the light that God has given them....

"The men that have long stood in positions of trust, while disregarding the light that God has given, are not to be depended upon. God wants them to be removed. He wants a new life element brought into the publishing institutions. There are those who have stood as managers and yet have not managed after God's order. Some have served on committees here and committees there, and have felt free to dictate just what the committee should say and do, claiming that those who did not carry out these ideas were sinning against Christ. When the power of God is manifest in the church and in the management of the various departments of His work, when it is evident that the managers are themselves controlled by the Holy Spirit of God, then it is time to consider that you are safe in accepting what they may say, under God. But you must know that you are guided by the principles of the Word of the living God. The great General of armies, the Captain of the Lord's host, is our Leader."

Standing before the largest gathering of Seventh-day Adventists to that time, the messenger of the Lord pointed out not only the real problem facing the church, but the real solution as well: "The time has come when this people are to be born again. Those that have never been born again, and those that have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins, and cannot see afar off, and have practiced their old habits of talking, prejudicing others, hindering the work, and being generally in the way of its advancement, would better be converted. God wants you to be converted, and may He help, that this work may go forward. He is a power for His people when they come into order. There must be a renovation, a reorganization; a power and strength must be brought into the committees that are necessary."

In both the pre-session meeting and this opening meeting of the conference, Ellen White's concerns were clearly expressed. There is perhaps a temptation for us—so many years later—to think that the course to be followed by "the brethren" lay so clearly delineated before them that it required but very little thought to know exactly what should be done. Such is the luxury of hindsight, but it has little to do with present-tense reality. Even Ellen White had said, "just how it is to be accomplished I cannot say." At the close of the session she would again speak of this uncertainty: "I was never more

astonished in my life than at the turn things have taken at this meeting. This is not our work. God has brought it about. Instruction regarding this was presented to me, but until the sum was worked out at this meeting, I could not comprehend this instruction. God's angels have been walking up and down in this congregation. I want every one of you to remember this."⁴

Organizational Reforms

The obvious need at the 1901 General Conference was conversion. First and foremost, the spiritual condition of the men to whom she spoke was Ellen White's burden. But there were other matters, more mundane, which required attention. The practical work of the church must go forward, and to do so required some system of organization. What was her counsel in this more tangible arena?

In the passages quoted above we have already seen several calls for strengthening the work of the General Conference. She said that "a power and strength must be brought into the committees that are necessary." "Greater strength must be brought into the managing force of the Conference." She called for "the taking in of other minds," in order that they might "connect with the...General Conference."

From this counsel we might justly conclude that the Lord was calling for a stronger General Conference, playing a greatly expanded and more important role in His work on earth. And He was. But there was another side to it as well. God was also calling for a work of decentralization, a breaking of the bonds of arbitrary control which had been forged in a mistaken effort to bring real strength to the work of the church.

Three days into the conference, Ellen White made this second side of the issue very clear:

"While on my journey to Battle Creek, as I have visited different places, I at Los Angeles, asked, Why do you not do this? and, Why do you not do that? And the response has been, 'That is what we want to do, but we must first get the consent of the board, the members of which are in Oakland.' But, I asked, have you not men here with common sense? If you have not, then by all means transport them. You show great deficiency by having your board hundreds of miles away. That is not the wisdom of God. There are men right where you are who have minds, who have judgment, who need to exercise their brains, who need to be learning how to do things, how to take up aggressive work, how to annex new territory. They are not to be dependent on a Conference at Battle Creek or a board at Oakland.

'Fit the Health Retreat at St. Helena there was something which greatly needed to be done, and I called the leading men together, and urged upon them the importance of doing this thing. But they said, 'We have no authority to act. We must first communicate with the board.' What do you mean,' I asked, 'by acting in such a childish manner? Have you no men here who can be put in a position of responsibility, to decide such questions? If you have not, then do your best at once to find those who can fill such places here. We

must have someone right at hand to whom we can speak. The board must not be at San Francisco or Oakland, but here. They must be where we can counsel with them at once, in cases of necessity. Here is something that must be done immediately, and even if you have no official authority, take off your coats, and go to work to do that which must be done for the health of the institution.' I relate this to show you how foolish it is to have a board miles and miles away, instead of close at hand."⁵

A "Different Principle"

What was presented to the delegates was a call for both greater strength at "headquarters," *and* greater strength and autonomy in the field. As simple and desirable as this goal may sound, it was not easy to achieve. And in order to do so it was necessary that they do as Ellen White had said, beginning at the "foundation" and building upon a "different principle."

In the closing years of the nineteenth century the General Conference had operated on the principle that its strength came as a result of its direct control over the various entities of the church. To grant greater autonomy or to delegate authority to anyone else was seen as lessening the strength of the General Conference. Not surprisingly, many in Battle Creek had been reluctant to place even limited control of denominational affairs into others' hands.

Generally speaking, the example set by one's superiors is the example followed. The officers of the state Conferences naturally adopted a course similar to that taken toward them by the General Conference. And so the boards held sway, despite the difficulties arising from their inaccessibility.

But there *was* a better way. Strength need not be derived from arbitrary authority. Far better, it could come from the actual ability to be of service. When the General Conference would show itself strong in wisdom and ability to provide valuable counsel and practical assistance to those carrying forward the Lord's work in the field, the workers would readily enough recognize its authority.

Ellen White recognized this basic fact of human nature, this "different principle." She saw as well that it called for internal strength on the part of the General Conference before external strength could be expected. The qualifications, the skills, the abilities, the knowledge, and the effectiveness of the General Conference personnel in their work of assisting those "under them" in carrying on the actual work of the church could be the only real basis for their "authority"

All of which was a very tall order. How could a small group of men have all the skill and knowledge to provide wise counsel and appropriate help for a worldwide church? Ellen White had the answer: they couldn't; it was impossible. Hence the need for greater and more local autonomy.

This need was to be met by a process of education and the organization of an entirely new level of church administration. Where there had before been only one giant step from the local Conference to the General Conference, it was recognized that circumstances demanded an intermediate level of planning and

decision making. The newly formed Union Conferences were designed to supply this need, bringing able counselors and capable leadership much nearer the grass-roots of the church. In A. G. Daniells' words, "If Union Conferences are organized, a thousand details will be taken from the General Conference Committee, and placed in the hands of the local men, where they belong."⁶

Such a redistribution of responsibility made it imperative, if the General Conference was to continue in a useful capacity, that it redefine its role in the church and provide effective service to these newly formed Union Conferences. It was obvious that this new task called, not for men accustomed to arbitrary authority based solely on elected position, but men who were willing to work, to serve, to supply the needs of those for whom they labored. It would also demand a talent base as broad as possible. The answer was twofold: 1) enlarge the General Conference Executive Committee, and 2) ensure that its membership be as representative of all phases of church endeavor as possible. As early as her impromptu speech in the college library the day before the conference, Ellen White had pointed in this direction, calling for "every institution that bears a responsibility" in the church's work to have "a voice in the working of this cause."

The General Conference Committee

The constitution of the General Conference, as adopted in 1901, sought to meet this twofold need by enlarging the General Conference Committee to include twenty-five persons, "representative men connected with the various lines of work in the different parts of the world." In a further measure, it was recognized that the medical missionary work had been seriously neglected in years past, thus depriving the delegates of the General Conference of the experience necessary to properly represent that work or to even select qualified men to do so. As a consequence, it was specified that six of these twenty-five be selected by the Medical Missionary Association. Another five of the group were to be chosen "with special reference to their ability to foster and develop the true evangelical spirit in all departments of the work." Though not stipulated in the motions of the conference, it was anticipated that education, publishing, and other branches of the work would also be represented on the committee.⁷

The provision of the 1901 constitution which was destined to assume the greatest importance in the near future, however, was recommendation number ten: "That the General Conference Committee be empowered to organize itself, and to appoint all necessary agents and committees for the conduct of its work."

Simple as it may seem, it was this provision which formed the basis for so much consternation later on. Some today would call the provision a ticking time bomb. Others would call the eventual elimination of the provision (in 1903) the last, fatal step into unredeemable apostasy.

When the final gavel came down on the 1901 General Conference Session, the Seventh-day Adventist Church wore a whole new look. The personnel

selected to serve in the newly-created Union Conferences reported to their posts and busied themselves with discovering exactly what it meant to fill these previously unheard-of positions. The delegates returned to their homes cheered by the assurance that the Lord had been at work to solve the problems of His church. And in Battle Creek, "the heart of the work," the officers of the restructured General Conference settled in to meet new challenges.

The enlarged General Conference Executive Committee, having been empowered to "organize itself," had done so, selecting Elder A. G. Daniells as chairman. The months to come no doubt provided them a thousand opportunities to regret their action, but the General Conference Committee minutes of April 18, 1901, record that it was Dr. John Harvey Kellogg who made the motion, and Elder A. I Jones who seconded it.

Though it was a slowly-dawning realization, it was this issue of the General Conference Executive Committee that was to prove most divisive in the coming years. To understand the developments of the early 1900s, it is essential that one understand the differing philosophical positions on this question.

"Representation"

The closing years of the 1800s had demonstrated the disastrous results of leaving all decision-making in the hands of a few men. In contrast, the delegates at the General Conference of 1901 saw the potential of a clear, authoritative "voice of God" in the calm, deliberate judgment of the church *as a whole*. It was obvious, however, that physical limitations made this ideal unattainable. There was simply no way to bring together every member of the worldwide church to consider questions of policy and planning.

While the abuses of the 1890s had given rise to a feeling of distrust toward human leaders, it was obvious that the Lord Himself used leaders and a chain of command. Even the angels were subject to commanding angels. Was there no method of ensuring that the church's leaders would lead aright? Was there no method of controlling the power placed in their hands?

In 1901, one of the major concepts upon which the delegates built the reorganized structure was "representation." The idea was simply that God works *through* His church to *lead* His church. Leaders were to derive their authority and mandate from the church, somewhat as an elected official in a modern democracy is to derive his authority from the citizens. To be sure, there were obvious differences—for instance, no one proposed open elections of General Conference officers in which all church members had a vote. (To do so would require some system of informing all members of the merits and qualifications of different "candidates" for office. The inevitable deterioration of such a system into the realm of party politics is sufficient reason to exclude it from God's church.)

Still, the delegates sought an appropriate method of allowing the voice of the church as a whole to speak in the election of her officers. The church needed a system that allowed the concerns, the needs, and the wisdom of the laity to find expression in the actions of the church. The answer the delegates

chose was "representation." The concept called for the fullest possible preservation of the voice of the church at each successive step up the ladder of church organization. Thus local churches were to be represented by their delegates on the local conference level. Local conferences were to be represented by their delegates on the Union Conference level. And Union Conferences were to be represented by their delegates on the General Conference level.

In addition, the General Conference Executive Committee was to be selected with the goal of representing all major branches of the denomination's work. It was this consideration that led the delegates to specify that six of the twenty-five committee members be selected by the Medical Missionary Association to represent that branch of the Lord's work.

Election of the General Conference Officers

These aspects of representative governance are common. But the delegates went one step further. The point in question was the selection of the General Conference officers: Who was to make this selection? The Constitution adopted in 1901 stipulated that the committee was to "organize itself." A. G. Daniells explained: "This, you all understand, means that this committee will have power to appoint its officers—its chairman, its secretary, its treasurer, and other necessary secretaries and committees to do the departmental work."

It was, admittedly, a radical departure from the norm. Immediately following Elder Daniells' explanation, H. C. Basney expressed his concern: "Would it not be taking the power to elect the president of the General Conference out of the hands of these delegates, if this committee can elect its own chairman? If this is the way it is to be done, it appears to me as though more power will be concentrated in this committee than ever before."¹¹

The next day, as the recommendation came before the delegates for their vote, the same question remained. C. I. Bollman, the first delegate to speak after the reading of the recommendation, said: "I would like to ask, Does that take the election of the president of the General Conference out of the hands of the Conference, and lodge it with the committee? and if so, why?"

Elder W. C. White responded: "It seems to be the mind of this Conference that responsibility shall not be centralized and fixed upon a few individuals for a long period. Times change; the necessities of the cause call for men to change the character of their work, and their place of operation. It seems to be for the advantage of the work to allow this committee, which will be a thoroughly representative one, to choose its chairman, its secretaries, its treasurers, its committees, and agents; then if the necessities of the cause demand that any of these officers shall change their work they are in a position to resign, when their comrades on the committee may fill their places. It is quite possible that a sentiment will be created, or a sentiment that already exists may manifest itself, that no one should be chairman of this committee for a period of more than twelve months at a time."¹²

Surprisingly, there was no further discussion of the question; the delegates voted to implement this recommendation as a part of the new constitution.

But the issue was not to disappear so simply. Circumstances must first set the stage, but the question of "representation" would come to the fore again.

Burning of the Sanitarium

Time passed. It was February 18, 1902, and Dr. Kellogg was on his way home to Battle Creek. Changing trains in Chicago, the doctor received his first notice that the Battle Creek Sanitarium—his pride and joy—had been reduced to ash and cinders by fire. Taking his seat on the train, he requested a desk and paper. Preliminary plans for a new building were finished by the time he arrived home.

The *Review and Herald* of February 25, 1902, told the story: 'A few minutes before four o'clock on Tuesday morning, February 18, the night watchman, while on his round of inspection in the main building, found that some of the electric call bells would not ring, owing to a 'short circuit' which had in some way been set up between the electric wires in the basement of the building. While attending to this, the odor of smoke was detected, coming from beneath the men's bath room. Summoning assistance from the night clerk's office, a hurried investigation was made, and a fire was found to have started in the basement at a point underneath the massage room. This was in a large wing of the main building, extending eastward. A dense smoke was rising, and the alarm was immediately given from two alarm boxes in the main building, and from the nearest city box, and help summoned from a fire station located close by. But the fire was in a place not easy to get at with the hose, and spread rapidly, running upwards through some ventilating shafts, and breaking out in a few moments' time at the top of the building....

'All were gotten out of their rooms, and carried or led to a position of safety, many climbing down the fire escapes, with which the building was well provided....

"The loss on the buildings burned was about \$300,000. This loss is a little more than half covered by insurance."

The Living Temple

Disregarding Ellen White's often-expressed wish that "the sanitarium were miles away from Battle Creek,"¹³ the doctor laid plans for not just a new building, but a larger and more expensive building. Naturally, such a project would entail considerable expense, therefore a plan was laid for the denomination to mobilize the laity in a campaign to sell a new book prepared by the doctor. All profits, including Kellogg's royalties, would go to assist the medical work of the church. This book, of course, was Kellogg's infamous volume, *The Living Temple*. Though Daniells had premonitions of the conflict to come over Kellogg's pantheism as early as the spring of 1902, it was another issue which first brought the two strong-minded leaders into direct conflict.

Early summer saw both men in Europe attending to matters of business. Kellogg wanted very much to begin sanitarium work in England, and considered it providential when he found a favorable site near London that he felt

certain he could purchase for only twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars. While at Christiana (now Oslo), Norway, Daniells received a telegram from Kellogg calling for a meeting to discuss the issue. When Daniells and those with him protested that the denomination was already heavily indebted and could ill-afford further obligations, Kellogg "just flew into a rage. He hit the table with a terrible bang, and said, 'You do not want to have any medical work done in England. You are blocking everything, and I am going to say Good day to the whole of you.'"¹⁴

According to Daniells' account, that afternoon the two men met again: Kellogg said, "'Look here, Elder, we have worked together too long and too well, to have a break here.'

"I said, 'That is exactly my sentiment.'

"'But I want to talk over this new policy you have formed.'

"We went into the washroom of the printing house, and he pushed me in. He came in and shut the door and stood against it. Then he began to tell me that we had never had such a policy since we began our work, that we had always assumed obligations and worked them out and raised the money.

"I said, 'I know we have always assumed, but we have never paid up yet, and we are in debt heels over head everywhere, the Pacific Press, the Review and Herald, all our schools, everything we have got is just buried with debt, and we are paying out interest enough to purchase an institution. I am pledged to my committee and to our people, not to go on any longer with this borrowing policy.'

"Then he went at it. He wept, and he stormed, and he told me that Sister White would roll me over in the dust if I took such a stand....

"He kept me there nearly two hours, until I was so nervous it seemed I would jump out of the window.... Finally I just stepped right up to him, and I raised my hand and pointed my little finger, [and said] 'Look here, Doctor. It is no use for you to say another word. I am set. My conscience is in this, and I will not violate my conscience. You can stop right here, for I will never consent to this thing, until I have the approval of Sister White and of the General Conference Committee.'

"He just settled his eyes on me like a dark shadow falling over me. Then he said, 'Well, sir, I will never work with you on this cash policy. I will see you in America. Good day.'¹⁵

Though it is true that this account gives only Daniells' version of the experience—and that from the perspective of thirty-four years after the fact—it is certain that the relationship between the two men was severely strained by the time the question of *The Living Temple* came up for consideration by the General Conference Executive Committee in late summer. Failing to arrive at a consensus on the acceptability of the book, the Executive Committee appointed a subcommittee of four to study the book in detail. Yet even the smaller group was divided. A. T. Jones, Dr. Kellogg, and Dr. David Paulson reported that they could "find in the book, *Living Temple*, nothing which appears to us to be contrary to the Bible or the fundamental principles of the Christian religion."

W W. Prescott, as the dissenting member of the subcommittee, reported, "I am compelled to say that I regard the matter, outside those portions of the book which deal with physiology and hygiene, as leading to harm rather than good; and I venture to express the hope that it will never be published."¹⁶

Finally, the Executive Committee sided with Prescott's minority view; *The Living Temple* would not be published under the auspices of the church. Unconvinced, Dr. Kellogg ordered an initial printing of five thousand copies at his own expense. The books were to be produced by the Review and Herald.

Effort to Replace A. G. Daniells

From Kellogg's point of view, the situation was deteriorating badly. And since it seemed that Daniells was the source of his problems, the answer was obvious: someone more accommodating must be found to serve as chairman of the General Conference Executive Committee. It was unthinkable that any of the medical men on the committee would ever be made chairman, Kellogg must have reasoned, but surely there must be someone more workable than Daniells. Someone who had the confidence of the ministerial faction of the committee. It was, after all, necessary to carry a majority of the twenty-five votes. With six from the medical group, and one from the candidate himself, it would require only six more votes to reach the required thirteen.

Thus it was that in late fall of 1902 a suggestion came to the members of the General Conference Executive Committee: Elder Daniells should devote himself full time to the fostering of the church's missionary work. For him to do so would require that he be relieved of the many items of routine business that came with the job of committee chairman, but in light of the importance of missionary outreach, A. T Jones would be willing to take this added burden upon himself.¹⁷ Jones was, by this time, little more than an echo of Dr. Kellogg, yet he retained considerable influence with the ministerial brethren. No other candidate could have served Kellogg better. But it was not to be. When the votes were counted, Daniells remained as chairman.

It was a close call. Had Jones been elected chairman it would have thrown considerable weight behind Kellogg and all that he stood for at the time. Daniells, Prescott, and W. C. White were understandably concerned. Short of divine omniscience there is no telling where such a turn of events might have led.

Burning of the Review and Herald

But the General Conference leadership had little time to spend worrying over what might have been. Real events were bad enough. December 30, 1902, the second time that year, a major Adventist enterprise fell prey to fire. As hundreds of onlookers stood helplessly by, the Battle Creek Fire Department did their futile best to combat the blaze that reduced the Review and Herald publishing plant to ruins. It is worth noting that earlier that day the building had been inspected by the chief of the city fire department. Examining the electrical lines and other possible sources of danger, he "pronounced

everything in satisfactory condition." " Obviously, *something* wasn't satisfactory. Though the building was totally destroyed, once again the mercy of God was evident; no lives were lost.

Five days later, when the debris had cooled enough to allow, the fire-proof vault was opened. All the printing plates stored inside had survived. The plates for *The Living Temple*, however, were waiting to go on the press at the time of the fire and so disappeared in the flames.¹⁹

Though space does not permit a full investigation of the causes and circumstances of the Review fire, it should be noted that they are extremely instructive. Warnings from Ellen White had gone unheeded far too long. The distinctive mission of the printing house had been lost from sight.

In November, 1901, the message now found in *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 90-96 was read to the Board of Directors of the Review and Herald. It reads, in part: "I feel a terror of soul as I see to what a pass our publishing house has come. The presses in the Lord's institution have been printing the soul-destroying theories of Romanism and other mysteries of iniquity. The office must be purged of this objectionable matter...."

"You have given matter containing Satan's sentiments into the hands of the workers, bringing his deceptive, polluting principles before their minds. The Lord looks upon this action on your part as helping Satan to prepare his snare to catch souls. God will not hold guiltless those who have done this thing. He has a controversy with the managers of the publishing house. I have been almost afraid to open the *Review*, fearing to see that God has cleansed the publishing house by fire...."

"Unless there is a reformation, calamity will overtake the publishing house, and the world will know the reason.... God asks, 'Shall I not judge for these things?' I saw heavenly angels turning away with grieved countenances. God has been mocked by your hardness of heart, which is continually increasing. According to their responsibility will be the punishment of those who know the truth and yet disregard God's commands."

The events of so many years ago are important to us today. By any account, the members of God's church carry a greater responsibility now than did the men of decades past. Too, there is more at stake: "Three nights before the Review office burned, I was in an agony that words cannot describe. I could not sleep. I walked the room, praying to God to have mercy upon His people. Then I seemed to be in the Review office with the men who have the management of the institution. I was trying to speak to them and thus to help them. One of authority arose and said, 'You say, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we; therefore, we have authority to do this thing and that thing and the other thing. But the word of God forbids many of the things that you propose to do.' At His first advent, Christ cleansed the temple. Prior to His second advent He will again cleanse the temple...."

"In the visions of the night I saw a sword of fire hung out over Battle Creek.

"Brethren, God is in earnest with us. I want to tell you that if after the warnings given in these burnings the leaders of our people go right on, just as

they have done in the past, exalting themselves, God will take the bodies next. Just as surely as He lives, He will speak to them in language that they cannot fail to understand."²⁰

1902 had been a hard year for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Sandwiched between two devastating fires had been conflicts over finances, theology, and leadership. Worse yet, none of the problems were solved. 1903 would bring another General Conference session—and more conflict.

General Conference of 1903

The General Conference session of 1903 was held in the city of Oakland, California. Many, especially those in the higher echelons of Adventist leadership, looked forward to these meetings with a mixture of fear and hope. Their hope was that some way might be found to bring stability into the working arrangements of the denomination and its many associated enterprises; their fear was that the problems they then faced would remain—or worsen. The difficulty, of course, was that different ones held to different ideas of where and how this desired stability was to be found.

Allowing for minor exceptions, it is safe to say that a serious division existed within the highest levels of church leadership. A. G. Daniells, W. C. White, and W. W. Prescott formed the core of one pole, while J. H. Kellogg, A. I. Jones, and (to a lesser extent) E. J. Waggoner formed the other. Although often well hidden from casual observers, deep issues divided the two camps, and though open conflict was uncommon, the lesser lights of Adventist administrative circles naturally tended to gravitate toward one or the other of the two.

After nearly two years' experience with the new constitution adopted in 1901, two areas of special concern had attracted attention: ownership of Adventist institutions, and the election of the General Conference officers. A third concern—of a somewhat different nature—rested most heavily on Ellen White.

Writing to Judge Jesse Arthur in mid-January of 1903, she said: "The result of the last [1901] General Conference has been the greatest, the most terrible, sorrow of my life. No change was made. The spirit that should have been brought into the whole work as the result of that meeting was not brought in because men did not receive the Testimonies of the Spirit of God. As they went to their several fields of labor, they did not walk in the light that the Lord had flashed upon their pathway, but carried into their work the wrong principles that had been prevailing in the work at Battle Creek.

"The Lord has marked every movement made by the leading men in our institutions and Conferences. It is a perilous thing to reject the light that God sends."²¹

This statement has been the object of widely varying interpretation, and so requires careful note. There are those who have used these words of Ellen White to "prove" that the General Conference session of 1901 accomplished nothing. Worse yet, they say, the apostasy within denominational leadership was growing.

Others, no doubt equally sincere, have contended that this passage finds proper application exclusively to the case of Dr. Kellogg and those siding with him. That the good doctor had not profited as he might have from the experience of the 1901 General Conference session is beyond controversy. Ellen White leaves no question on this point as she writes to Elder Daniells in September 1902:

"I am much worried about Dr. Kellogg. In many respects, his course is not pleasing the Lord. It seems to be so easy for him to drift away from foundation principles. He is in great danger of not holding the beginning of his confidence steadfast unto the end.

"My brother, I wish to write a few words to you confidentially in regard to the Doctor; Do not let him beguile you by his statements. Some may be true; some are not true. 'He may suppose that all his assertions are true; but you should neither think that they are, nor encourage him to believe that he is right. I know that he is not in harmony with the Lord.'"²²

Though the human race seems slow to realize the fact, no amount of blame on one party is sufficient to prove another party blameless. The letter to Judge Arthur speaks of "the leading men in our institutions and Conferences," and no attempt to make those words say "Doctor Kellogg" has proven entirely satisfactory. The truth is that few, if any, gained what they might have gained in 1901; yet the Lord continued to plead with His wayward people.

Addressing the delegates on the fourth day of the 1903 General Conference session (March 30), Ellen White admonished: "Today God is watching His people. We should seek to find out what He means when He sweeps away our sanitarium and our publishing house. Let us not move along as if there were nothing wrong. King Josiah rent his robe and rent his heart. He wept and mourned because he had not had the book of the law, and knew not of the punishments that it threatened. God wants us to come to our senses. He wants us to seek for the meaning of the calamities that have overtaken us, that we may not tread in the footsteps of Israel, and say, 'The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are we,' when we are not this at all...."

"In every institution among us there needs to be a reformation. This is the message that at the last General Conference I bore as the word of the Lord. At that meeting I carried a very heavy burden, and I have carried it ever since. We did not gain the victory that we might have gained at that meeting. Why?—Because there were so few who followed the course of Josiah."u

These, then, were the conditions as the Seventh-day Adventist Church met for its thirty-fifth General Conference session.

Ownership of Institutions

The first of the two major issues facing the delegates was squarely addressed at the very beginning of the conference. No sooner had A. G. Daniells completed his "Chairman's Address" and opened the floor to the delegates than C. H. Parsons put forward a motion that a committee of five be appointed "to examine into the financial standing of all our various

institutions, and to investigate their relationship to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, and to devise and recommend some plan to this [General] Conference whereby all institutions, as far as possible under existing corporation laws, be placed under the direct ownership, control, and management of our people."²⁴

The motion passed, and in three days the Committee on Institutions presented to the delegates an eight-point report. The first recommendation was by far the most controversial. It read: 'All institutions to be owned directly by the people, either General Conference, Union Conference, State Conference, or organized mission field.'

The intent of the recommendation, though never stated bluntly, was to protect the denomination from losing its institutions into the hands of the discontented or apostatized. The concern was not an idle one. Though few then understood the legal ramifications of the Battle Creek Sanitarium's charter (newly rewritten in 1897), many—including Ellen White—had taken note of Doctor Kellogg's recently acquired habit of referring to the Sanitarium as "undenominational."²⁵

It was not without reason, then, that this motion was made. The discussion of this recommendation fills nearly fourteen pages of the *General Conference Bulletin*, and clearly reflects the delegate's intensity of feeling. Kellogg's later course in taking control of the Battle Creek Sanitarium away from the denomination understandably colors our perception of his line of reasoning, but it is interesting that he could speak so eloquently against an opposite line of injustice that did become a problem in only a few years. He argued: "Suppose two brethren in the church should say: 'We have a little money. Now we will build a schoolhouse for a church school. And, we will let the church use it: we will allow them to use it.' Suppose the church should rise up and say: 'The General Conference has said that all denominational institutions should be under the control and the ownership of the church and the denomination, hence you cannot use this schoolhouse for a church school unless the church owns the schoolhouse. And if you expect this thing to be done, the deed of this schoolhouse must be made [over] to the church or to the Conference.'²⁶

Protest as he would, Kellogg could see that he was making no headway. Ellen White had warned Daniells that, of the Doctor's statements, "Some may be true; some are not true." Three, at least, in this particular discussion proved to be in the first category. On separate occasions, Kellogg stated: "I expect you will pass it [the motion regarding ownership of institutions]; but I want you to know that I object to it, and do not expect to be bound by it in anything I have anything to do with"; and, "Don't be deceived; recognize the fact. Ownership always means control; and when you say that ownership doesn't mean control, you don't know what you are talking about."²⁷

Kellogg was right on all three counts—the motion *did* pass; he *never* complied with the ruling; and ownership of the Battle Creek Sanitarium *did* translate into control.

Revision of General Conference Constitution

The first major issue had come before the delegates at the very beginning of the Conference. The second was to make an appearance only shortly before its close. On the morning of April tenth the Committee on Plans and Constitution presented two reports: a majority report that consisted of a suggested revision of the General Conference constitution, and a three-paragraph minority report signed by E. J. Waggoner, David Paulson, and Percy T. Magan, which stated their conviction that to revise the constitution as suggested by the majority of the committee would be to "reverse the reformatory steps that were taken" in the General Conference session of 1901. Further, the minority stated that "the constitution proposed by the majority of the committee appears to us to be so subversive of the principles of organization given to us at the General Conferences of 1897 and 1901 that we cannot possibly subscribe to it." The recommendation of the minority was that "the constitution of 1901 be given a fair trial before it be annihilated."²⁸

The submission of a minority report is a rare occurrence in the councils of the Adventist church. As might be expected, the earnest (some might say strident) tone of the minority position touched off considerable debate. Twenty-seven pages of the *General Conference Bulletin* are taken up with consideration of the issue. And discussion continues today, most notably among those who cite the minority position as evidence that the revising of the 1901 constitution was the final sin that filled the cup of iniquity for the denomination and caused the corporate body of Seventh-day Adventism to be cast aside, rejected as the harlot of Babylon.

A comparison of the two constitutions is helpful in determining the source of contention. Just such an exercise was performed by H. W. Cottrell who filled the position of chairman during much of the debate in 1903, and may be easily duplicated by any who care to take the time to do so today. Such a comparison will show today, as it did decades ago, that the only significant aspect of the 1901 constitution that was not carried over into the 1903 constitution was Article Three, Section One—the provision that the General Conference Executive Committee was to organize itself.

A second point of concern was a newly added provision that allowed for five members of the Executive Committee to transact business "in harmony with the general plans outlined by the Committee" so long as either the president or vice-president was present and at least four of the members agreed on the action. Taken together, these two revisions pointed toward the resurrection of the "kingly power" that the General Conference of 1901 had sought to put away—at least in the minds of Waggoner, Paulson, Magan, Jones, and Kellogg.

No doubt it was difficult for most of the delegates to give unbiased consideration to what these brethren had to say, since their sympathy with Dr. Kellogg—and especially Jones' part in trying to oust Daniells as chairman of the General Conference Executive Committee—was well known. And though

it remained discreetly in the background during the discussion of the motion, it is unrealistic to imagine that it did not occur to many of the delegates that eliminating the "self-organizing" provision for the Executive Committee was an easy way to ensure that such an effort would never be made again.

Instead, the constitution of 1903 provided for the officers of the General Conference to be elected directly by the delegates. Such important decisions would no longer be left in the hands of a mere twenty-five men. No, the whole body of delegates (the great majority of whom were ministers) would decide such matters. It was "safer" that way.

Such was the thinking of the delegates. When they cast their votes, eighty-five concurred with the majority report. The necessary three-fourths majority was exceeded by the rather narrow margin of four votes and the new constitution went into effect. There was some complaining later that several delegates who opposed the measure were not in the room at the time of the vote. Jones said that, had they been there, the motion would not have carried.²⁹ It would seem, though, that these delegates did not share the level of concern over this measure that Jones and Kellogg had, or they would never have left the room when they did.

The General Conference session of 1903 dealt with many other matters, of course, but these were the two of greatest importance. The decisions made at this conference were pivotal: never again did either Kellogg or Jones stand in such favorable relation to the organized Seventh-day Adventist Church. It would be some years yet until the two men were formally disfellowshipped, but there is no doubt that the outcome of the 1903 General Conference session was a major milestone in their disappointing exodus from God's church.

From the perspective of the day, it no doubt appeared that the "Daniells forces" had gained a decisive victory over the "Kellogg forces." But what of *our* perspective? What can we learn from this history of years ago?

Temporary Policy vs. Eternal Principle

We must here note that the two policies that sparked the antagonism between Kellogg and Daniells, while called for at the time, were not eternal absolutes. The "cash only" financial policy that Daniells instituted was necessary just then, but five years later Ellen White would write, "He [the Union Conference president] should not cling to the idea that unless money is in hand no move should be made that calls for the investment of means. If in our past experience we had always followed this method, we would often have lost special advantages."³⁰

Similarly, while there was particular cause for concern on the issue of institutional ownership in 1903, in 1907 Ellen White would protest to Elder Daniells that the "Madison School" was being ostracized because it was not owned and controlled by the denomination. She pointedly decried this injustice, and called for improved working relationships and even financial assistance for the school, despite its independence from conference control. In fact, she saw wisdom in the school remaining independent.³¹

In retrospect, it cannot be denied that the revised constitution of 1903 did greatly increase the influence of the church's ministerial force over the General Conference Executive Committee. The accusation of some that this step cost the church her corporate standing before God as His "denominated people" is extremely difficult to reconcile with Ellen White's continued involvement with the General Conference. At the same time, we find that she chose not to take part in the discussion of revising the constitution and never seems to have commented on the question directly.

One can only wonder if the 1901 system might not have worked well, after all. It did survive the test of Kellogg's attempted takeover in 1902. Perhaps the flexibility of the system would have proved an asset in the long run. Perhaps it would have been a blessing to the church by maintaining greater lay involvement in decision-making and administration. Certainly the financial and business losses of recent years have shown us the advantage of supplementing our various corporate boards—often made up very largely of ministers—with the talents of Christian businessmen.

What difference would the 1901 constitution have meant to the church? Only Omniscience can say with certainty. But for us there are lessons which are obvious enough. Clearly the events of 1901-1903 have much to say to us today.

It is vital that we, as a denominated people under the government of Heaven, maintain a proper perspective on the issues we face. In the early years of this century, Seventh-day Adventists were spared a denomination-wide disaster, not because someone discovered and enacted immutable principles of church governance, but because there were men who—though imperfect themselves—determined to protect as best they knew how the inspired truths of Adventism. For this we should be thankful. But we must also learn a lesson.

Later events show clearly that some of the principles advocated by Dr Kellogg and Elder Jones were not *all* wrong. Under different circumstances their ideas were appropriate. But no matter how "right" they may have been at a later time, Kellogg and Jones were wrong in their application of those principles—in the manner they applied them, at that time, under those circumstances. And the theories and policies that prevented them from carrying out their plans were—under other circumstances—quite inappropriate. Is the Lord that fickle? Does He change His mind so quickly?

No. The Lord is not confused; He is not changing; it is we who become confused when we allow the devil's cheap deceptions of external appearances to blind our minds to the spiritual realities of the moment.

In 1906 Ellen White was still trying to explain the problem to some who seemed unable to see beyond the surface: "The warnings of the Holy Spirit have been disregarded, and there has been persistent work of deception. A. T. Jones has permitted himself to be used as the voice of Dr J. H. Kellogg....

"A. T. Jones has a theory of the truth, as expressed in his books. He does not repudiate these, but he virtually goes back upon their teachings, by the course of action he is following."³²

Even today there are those who hide their real motives and intentions behind a pious garb of once-appropriate platitudes, positions, and policies. And there are those today who lack the discernment to tell the difference, who lack the ability to see when change is called for and when it is not.

We are today in as great danger as were the members of God's church years ago. We need to look beyond the "theory of the truth," and weigh the "course of action" in the balances of heavenly justice. To fail in this task will leave us deceived, and will not win for us the commendation of God. We are told that "the Lord will not write as wise those who cannot distinguish between a tree that bears thorn-berries and a tree that bears olives."³³ But it is exactly this test which comes to all-especially in times of change.

1. See chapter twenty-one
2. See A. V Olson, *Thirteen Crisis Years*
3. Manuscript 43a, 1901; quoted in A. L. White, *The Early Elmshaven Years*, 76
4. 1901 *General Conference Bulletin*, 25, 464
5. *Ibid.*, 69
6. *Ibid.*, 229
7. *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 164
8. 1901 *General Conference Bulletin*, 185
9. *Ibid.*, 201-202, 187
10. *Ibid.*, 205
11. *Ibid.*, 189
12. *Ibid.*, 207
13. *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 134
14. A. G. Daniells, *How the Denomination was Saved from Pantheism*, 7 (A stenographically reported statement, March 12, 1935, E. G. White Estate Document File 15)
15. *Ibid.*, 8-9
16. W A. Spicer, *How the Spirit of Prophecy Met a Crisis*, Unpublished Manuscript, (1938), 27 (E. G. White Estate Document File 15)
17. *Ibid.*, 28
18. *Review and Herald*, January 6, 1903
19. A. G. Daniells, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, (1936), 335
20. *The Publishing Ministry*, 170-171
21. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, 122
22. *Battle Creek Letters*, 59
23. 1903 *General Conference Bulletin*, 31
24. *Ibid.*, 21
25. See *Battle Creek Letters*, 51
26. 1903 *General Conference Bulletin*, 75
27. *Ibid.*, 78, 80
28. *Ibid.*, 145-147
29. A. T Jones, *Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts*, 21; Please note that the full text of this booklet is available from Leaves-of-Autumn Books, Inc., Payson, Arizona. Edited versions have been distributed by various publishers, some of which are misleading since they have deleted all Jones' attacks upon Ellen White and other material that points to weaknesses in his arguments.
30. *The Paulson Collection*, 282
31. See chapter thirty-two
32. *The Paulson Collection*, 331
33. *Review and Herald*, September 7, 1897

The Rise of Spiritualism

When modern spiritualism made its debut in the mid-1800s the Advent believers saw it as a sign of fulfilling prophecy. As such, it deserved to be watched, and watch it they did. The back page of the July 4, 1854, Review and Herald carried an account of the 'Address of the National Society for the Diffusion of Spiritual Knowledge.' It portrays the rapid rise to prominence which spiritualism enjoyed at that time, and brings to mind the question, "Could it happen again?"

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES: But a few short years ago, in an obscure locality, and under circumstances which seemed to warrant the belief in an early termination of the so-called dream, Spiritualism, in its present form was born. Its few advocates, in the early days of its life, were looked upon as lunatic—were despised for their faith; and men of respectability and standing in society could hardly be found who were willing to examine into the facts connected with the alleged phenomena, for fear of the reproach of the entire unbelieving community.

Since that period, Spiritualism has extended with a rapidity unprecedented in the annals of the world until, today, it has become a respectable power in society. Men whose education and whose genius have fitted them for occupying the highest stations, either in politics or in the church, have sacrificed all positions of earthly aggrandizement for the sake of what they believe to be the

enjoyment of high and holy truth. Connected with that movement today are many hundreds and thousands of men who are respected by their neighbors for their integrity and worth—esteemed and loved by their friends for their many amiable qualities.

The subject has arrested the attention of the learned all over this land, and in many other lands. It has produced books, for and against. Many of the publications on both sides of the question are marked by ability and strength.

Within the last two years, Spiritualism has increased in strength and stature with a growth unprecedented in the history of mental giants. If it be a lie, there is every prospect of its enveloping this world, and by its weight, sinking this world one degree lower in the depth of degradation.

If it be a lie, it has come in so lovely a garb that men will seek it unless they be warned by a strong voice; men will flee to it as though it were

an angel sent from heaven—will become enveloped in its false light, and will be borne down to death by the weight of its false glory.

If it be a lie, ye men of America, who have one thought towards the good of your fellows, it is your duty to come forward as one man, to tear the veil from the face of the lie, and expose it in all its hideousness. We challenge you as men—as earnest men, as men desiring the good of your fellows—to come forth and meet us in the fight, expose our errors, draw the shroud away, and enable the world to see us as we are. We challenge you to come and do that thing.

Citizens of the United States! We feel authority for saying that the day for raising the cry of humbug, chicanery, delusion, has passed away forever. You know—all of you who

have reflective minds—that the application of these terms to this subject can no longer produce results; but that rather these invectives, launched at your supposed enemies, will rebound upon yourselves, and cover you with weakness.

Your professed teachers, your men in high places, the learned of your universities, the eloquent of your pulpits have dealt in them long enough. And what results have they achieved? The theories which the universities sent forth to account for the alleged phenomena, as they were pleased to term them, have not only rendered their authors, but the universities, ridiculous in the minds of intelligent men. All the theories which they reared have crumbled to the dust, and their authors cannot shake that dust from off their clothing.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Moses Hull and the Spiritualists

The following account, written by Elder J. N. Loughborough, first appeared in the Pacific Union Recorder in the issues of June 6 and 13, 1912.

DURING the winter of 1861-1862 I was laboring in the state of Michigan, in several new places; also organized some of the churches in the State. In council of the conference committee, in the spring of 1862, it was recommended that Moses Hull and I labor with the Michigan tent. This we did, using our tent in three places [from June 7 through September 7]. Brother I. D. Van Horn was our tent master, it being his first experience with the tent. In each of these places some souls were won to the truth.

Moses Hull had a debate with a Methodist minister in the tent at Charlotte, on the immortality question, which aided in settling many minds on that question. At both Ionia and Lowell he had debates with Spiritualists. The doctor with whom he debated at Ionia expected to meet someone who believed in the immortality of the soul. He was not prepared to meet the doctrine of the unconscious state of the dead. He stated publicly at the close of the debate that he was defeated, but said it was because the

spirits left him, and helped Hull. The debate at Lowell was with S. P. Leland, a Spiritualist lecturer. This was a complete triumph for the truth, and resulted, shortly after, in Leland's renouncing Spiritualism and becoming a Christian.

The Lord surely helped Hull in the debate. But afterward it seemed to "turn his head," and he thought he would be a match for the Spiritualists anywhere. He engaged to debate with one Jaimeson, at Paw Paw, Michigan, a strong Spiritualist center, where there was no interest in the truth, and not one of our people to stand by him. On the other hand, the Spiritualists got some of their strongest mediums and sat in a circle around the speakers. Hull admitted to me afterward, how he went into that debate. He said: "I thought: Let them bring on their devils. I am enough for the whole of them. But when I arose to make my second speech, my tongue was seemingly as thick as my hand, and what I had often used before as argument, seemed to me like nonsense. I was defeated."

Jaimeson, who has since renounced Spiritualism and resides in Colorado, said of that debate to Brother States: "Hull was mesmerized, and I told him so there; for before the first day of the debate was over he came to me and said, 'I am all ready to go out and advocate Spiritualism.' I said to him: You are mesmerized. You do not know what you are about. You had better go home and think a while."...

For two weeks after the Hull and Jaimeson debate at Paw Paw, Michigan, Hull, in Battle Creek, seemed like a man half "off his base." Finally he seemed to arouse to some sense of his condition. He got Brother and Sister White and Elder Cornell to come with him to my house in Battle Creek for a talk and a praying season for him. This was on November 5, 1862. In the praying season Sister White was given a vision on his case, remaining on her knees during the entire vision. It was there decided for Hull to go with Brother and Sister White in meetings with our churches in Michigan. This he did, and measurably recovered himself from his sad condition.

In the spring it was decided by the General Conference Committee that Hull and I labor during the summer with the tent in [the] New England States. This would take him away from those who knew of his trials. It would also place him among those who knew not of his past experience, and give him a chance to recover himself if he would. On June 6, 1863, in the Otsego vision, his case was again shown to Sister White.

What she saw in these two visions is found in volume one of the *Testimonies*, pages 426-483.

Hull and I left Battle Creek on June 2, 1863.... As Hull spoke in these meetings on Bible truths he seemed like himself again. From July 10 to August 16 we held a tent meeting at North Newport, New Hampshire. Here more than a score accepted the truth, and were baptized. All seemed to go well until near the close of the meetings. Then Hull came to me with his "old doubts." We went off together into the woods for a praying season. He was relieved, and said he would take hold again in earnest.

We pitched the tent for a second series of meetings [but] toward the last, Hull's objections came upon him again in great force. In the evening of September 20 he gave his last discourse among Seventh-day Adventists. His text was Revelation 7:14, "Great Tribulation." He exhorted all to hold fast to the truth, and said: "If I should give up the whole truth, that would make no difference with you. Hold fast to the truth."

After meeting, he said to me. "I am going home to Ligonier, Indiana, in the morning." On the morning of the twenty-first of September I went with him to the station. Just before taking the cars he said to me, "I am not going to preach any more." In six weeks from that time he was associating with the Spiritualists, and remained in their ranks to his death, which occurred in San Jose, California, in the spring of 1907.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

The Omega

SINCE the early years of this century, Ellen White's ominous "omega" prophecy has served warning of trouble to come. Different sources of concern have been identified through the years as likely candidates for the notorious title. Yet time—and apostasy—continue.

What does it mean? What may we expect? Do these cryptic words have valid meaning to us today? How will this omega apostasy fit in with what else we know concerning the end times? These are all good questions; though certain of our answers must be tentative, let's look briefly at what we do know. Let's start at the beginning—the "alpha."

'Alpha' is the Greek equivalent of our letter 'A.' "Beta" is the second Greek letter, and it is from a combination of the two that we derive our English word "alphabet." At the further end of the Greek alphabet is the "omega." Thus, when Christ states that He is the 'Alpha and Omega' He also speaks of Himself as the "first and the last." Revelation 1:11

In the early years of this century, heated controversy developed within the Seventh-day Adventist Church over the teachings of Dr John Harvey Kellogg. Especially was his book, *The Living Temple*, a point of contention. Though delaying comment for a considerable time in the hope that the leading brethren of the denomination could resolve the difficulty by themselves, Ellen White eventually went clearly on record in opposition to the pantheistic sentiments of the doctor.

At first she wrote only on the general principles of the issue. Had these writings been given proper consideration, the whole question could have been laid to rest long before reaching crisis proportions. As the confusion continued, however, she became more and more specific. In October of 1903 her famous account of the fogbound vessel striking the iceberg cut short discussion of the book at the Autumn Council. But still, strong differences of opinion remained, thus necessitating more direct and pointed input from Ellen White.

It was in this setting that three statements dealing with the alpha and the omega of apostasy came from the pen of the prophet. These may be found in full context in *Selected Messages*, book 1, 193-208. The statements themselves are as follows:

"Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature."¹

"In the book *Living Temple* there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the warning God has given."²

"*Living Temple* contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while, and I trembled for our people."³

One additional comment—really just a passing reference—may be found in *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 211. Here Ellen White mentions "specious workings, which are the Alpha of the Omega." (In context, this is clearly a reference to the Kellogg apostasy.)

Of the two terms, the alpha is by far the more clearly defined. Yet it is the omega which serves as the focal point of Ellen White's warning. Understandably enough, the most intriguing aspect of the whole issue is the identity of the omega. Just what is it which caused the prophet to tremble?

That the omega will be "of a startling nature" is clear. It is to be, unfortunately, successful in its efforts to ensnare those who fail to benefit from the warnings of the Spirit of Prophecy. In fact, its success seems to be the cause of Ellen White's concern. Beyond these few points, our knowledge of the omega must be based on our knowledge of the alpha and an understanding of the relationship implied by the terms Ellen White chose to express her thoughts.

The 'Alpha'

Fortunately, though we have so little information dealing directly with the omega, Ellen White and history have given us considerably more information concerning the alpha. The core element of the alpha was its denial of the specific personhood of God and of the reality of heavenly things. Thus God was understood to be an essence, an all-pervading "nonentity."⁴ The heavenly sanctuary—the very heart of distinctive Adventist doctrine—was reduced to "wherever God is," which amounted to everywhere in general and nowhere in particular.

Ellen White occasionally uses the terms "spiritualistic" and "spiritualism" when discussing *The Living Temple* and its teachings. This may be slightly misleading to those unfamiliar with the meaning of these words as they were used before the development of modern spiritualism in the 1850s. This meaning of making something "spiritual" rather than real and tangible is sometimes employed in the Spirit of Prophecy writings. Such is the case when Ellen White speaks of those who "spiritualize away the very truths" of the Bible.³ When she describes the alpha as spiritualistic because it sweeps away the foundations of the Advent message, it seems certain that this is the primary sense in which she uses the term. However, this distinction from what we normally think of as spiritualism is neither as hard and fast nor as significant as some would make it.

The direct involvement of satanic agencies in the experience of the alpha is clear. "When you wrote that book [*The Living Temple*] you were not under the inspiration of God. There was by your side the one who inspired Adam to look at God in a false light."

"The developments of these last days will soon become decided. When these spiritualistic deceptions are revealed to be what they really are—the secret workings of evil spirits—those who have acted a part in them will become as men who have lost their minds....

"As I am shown special things of Satan's science, and how he deceived the holy angels, I am afraid of the men who have entered into the study of the science that Satan carried into the warfare in heaven. How I have longed to be where I should not be compelled to see the same science practiced on this earth by medical practitioners! How my heart has been agonized as I have seen souls accepting the inducements held out to them to unite with those who were warring against God! When they accept the bait it seems impossible to break the spell that Satan casts over them, because the enemy works out the science of deception as he worked it out in the heavenly courts. He has worked so diligently with men in our day that he has won the game again and again."⁷

"If permitted, the evil angels will work the minds of men until they have no mind or will of their own. They are led as the angels cast out from heaven were led....

"Let the world go into spiritualism, into theosophy, into pantheism, if they choose. We are to have nothing to do with this deceptive branch of Satan's work."⁸

The Influence of Dr. Lewis

There is one other link to the more commonly recognized forms of spiritualism. The following testimony is from Doctor Sanford P S. Edwards:

"One day a white-bearded gentleman came in [to my classroom at Battle Creek College] and took a seat with the class. It was A. H. Lewis, D.D., LL.D., the editor of the *Sabbath Recorder*, church paper of the Seventh Day Baptists.... After the class Dr. Lewis came over and shook hands and said, 'You gave a wonderful talk to your class. Is this not an unusual approach to a scientific subject like physiology?... Doctor, do you not think that you may be stretching a point, in emphasizing the exact features of God's being? He is a spirit. You talk of His hands, His feet and eyes and ears and tongue just like He were a physical being. God is a presence, an essence; He is everywhere, in the trees, in the flowers, the food we eat. Are you not in danger of getting too narrow a view of God?'...

"The discussion ended with my having learned where Dr Kellogg...got some, if not much of [his] pantheism. Dr. Lewis was once Mrs. Kellogg's pastor and president of Alfred University, where she got her degree. His paper, the *Sabbath Recorder*, was steeped in pantheism. It came regularly to the Kellogg home."⁹

Despite minor inaccuracies in Edwards' account (though Lewis was very influential at Alfred University he never served as president), the linking of Lewis and Kellogg is significant. That this influence was more than short-lived is probable in light of the fact that Mrs. Kellogg, a lifelong Seventh Day Baptist, had graduated from Alfred University in 1872, and completed her

M.A. degree there in 1885. Lewis served as chairman of the Church History and Homiletics department from 1868 to 1892, and was prominent in Seventh Day Baptist circles.

Taken by itself, Edwards' account would only indicate a source for Kellogg's pantheism. In view of the fact that Lewis, in his youth, had been a spiritualistic medium, it takes on a different light. Worse yet, Lewis' wording in his account of the experience compounds the problem. He said, "Under [a spiritualist physician's] influence I became a 'medium,' *after the rude manner of those times.*"¹⁰ The evidence is inferential, but the former "rudeness" would seem to imply a more current sophistication. Though no positive connection has yet been shown, it is worth noting that this is exactly the position being taken at that time by the recently formed (1875) Theosophical Society of America. After seeking unsuccessfully to establish ties with the various spiritualist groups current at that time, the founders of the society proceeded on their own, denouncing American spiritualism as bungling and naïve. Their chosen message, as it appeared in the pages of their journal, *The Theosophist*, was a curious mixture of pantheism, reincarnation, meditation, and occult methodologies.

The society is still very much in existence, and is widely considered the single most important force in the early development of what is now more commonly referred to as the "New Age Movement."

The "Omega"

Armed with this information concerning the alpha, let's move on to the next—and, after **all**, the more important—question: What does the relationship between the alpha and the omega tell us about the final apostasy?

Over the years there have been two ways of looking at this relationship between the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. Some have noted that the two characters represent opposite extremes. The alpha is as far in one direction as one can go while the omega is as far as one can go the other way. Using this concept as a basis for understanding the omega has prompted the expectation that, whereas the alpha was the internalization of deity, the omega might well be an ignoring of the importance of the physical health or the complete externalization of the salvation process.

The other view of the relationship is that the omega is simply the ending point of what the alpha began; not the opposite at all but like the full-grown oak that started out as a little acorn. This concept has led to an expectation of a revived and expanded form of pantheistic or spiritualistic teaching making its way into Adventist doctrine and practice. For many years now, the first of these two ways of looking at the question has received the lion's share of attention. And the reason is obvious: who could imagine the Adventist Church being taken in by a deception against which we have been so fully warned?

Yet the evidence points to exactly that. Note Ellen White's statement concerning the "specious workings, which are the Alpha of the Omega." The use of the preposition "of" simply does not imply that the terms are opposites. Nor do her other comments:

"One, and another, and still another are presented to me as having been led to accept the pleasing fables that mean the sanctification of sin. *Living Temple* contains the alpha of a train of heresies."¹¹

In her writings she often uses such phrases as "train of evils," "train of circumstances," and "train of prophecy." Never do we find these expressions to mean anything other than a progression in a single direction. It would follow that a train of heresies is nothing more than a succession of kindred errors, in this case going from bad to worse.

Again we find similar expressions—these on much more positive subjects—which help us to understand Ellen White's idea of the relationship between alpha and omega. "Christ is the Alpha, the first link, and the Omega, the last link, of the gospel chain, which is welded in Revelation."¹² "We have a Bible full of the most precious truth. It contains the alpha and omega of knowledge."¹³ Surely, in these examples at least, she is not speaking of the alpha and the omega as opposite extremes.

What then might we expect of the omega? Of primary importance is the fact that it is the last of the devil's heresies to be brought upon the church. Knowing that the conflict is to broaden and extend till the end of time, we would expect it to be of terrible proportions. No wonder Sister White "trembled for our people."

The Great Final Test

Since it is to be the last heresy brought upon the church, we would expect it to be closely associated with the great final test. Normally we would think of the Sunday laws as the final test, and indeed they will be involved. Yet Ellen White has also called our attention to a somewhat different focus. "The truth for this time, the third angel's message, is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, meaning with increasing power, as we approach the great final test. This test must come to the churches *in connection with the true medical missionary work*, a work that has the great Physician to dictate and preside in all it comprehends."¹⁴

Why medical missionary work? What great test can that involve? "God's Word declares that Satan will work miracles. He will make people sick, and then will suddenly remove from them his satanic power. They will then be regarded as healed. These works of apparent healing will bring Seventh-day Adventists to the test. Many who have had great light will fail to walk in the light, because they have not become one with Christ."¹⁵

Farfetched? If only it were, but it is not. If we are to believe *The New Age Movement and Seventh-day Adventists*, a paper prepared by the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference, church members are experimenting with everything from "positive affirmations" to visualization to pendulum divination.

Many Adventists would be shocked by the story told there. Perhaps Ellen White would call it "most startling." In any case, it contains warnings which our people need. Page three offers this opinion: "The foundational belief

which ties together the diversified groups of New Agers is the unBiblical worldview of pantheism. Pantheism once knocked on the Adventist door through the teachings and influence of Dr. J. H. Kellogg, superintendent of the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, as well as of others. We believe it is knocking again today in more insidious ways."

Is this the omega? Is this heresy the "most startling" of them all? Is this deception the last of the last? It would be foolish to assert as fact that which cannot be proven, but certainly we are surrounded by modern spiritualistic error, and we have, to an alarming extent, been infiltrated by these tempting doctrines of devils.¹⁶

There is today, at the very least, one clear application of Ellen White's concerns of years ago. "The sentiments in *Living Temple* regarding the personality of God have been received even by men who have had a long experience in the truth. When such men consent to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we are no longer to regard the subject as a matter to be treated with the greatest delicacy. That those whom we thought sound in the faith should have failed to discern the specious, deadly influence of this science of evil, should alarm us as nothing else has alarmed us."¹⁷

1. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 197

2. *Ibid.*, 200

3. *Ibid.*, 203

4. See *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 68

5. See *The Great Controversy*, 675

6. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 314

7. *Battle Creek Letters*, 124, 128

8. *Ibid.*, 109

9. Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History*, Southern Publishing Association, (1975), 251-252

10. Theodore L. Gardiner, *Rev. Abram Herbert Lewis, D.D., LL.D., a Biographical Sketch*, American Sabbath Tract Society, (Plainfield, NJ: 1909), 15, emphasis supplied

11. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 315

12. *Ibid.*, vol. 10, 171

13. *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 299

14. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 1710*, emphasis supplied.

15. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 53

16. For example, the "Breathe-Free" stop-smoking plan, contains the following: "Napoleon Hill once said, 'Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.' It is a truth that has been demonstrated over and over again."

Though not quoted in the stop-smoking materials, consider another statement from the same author: "Now and again I have had evidence that unseen friends hover about me, unknowable to the ordinary senses. In my studies I have discovered there is a group of strange beings who maintain a school of wisdom...."

"The School has Masters who can disembody themselves and travel instantly to any place they choose...to give knowledge directly, by voice...."

"Now I knew that one of these Masters had come across thousands of miles, through the night, into my study...."

"'You have earned the right to reveal a Supreme Secret to others,' said the vibrant voice. 'You have been under the guidance of the Great School.... Now you must give the world a blueprint.'..." Napoleon Hill, *Grow Rich With Peace of Mind*, Ballantine Books, (1967), 158-160

And what was that Supreme Secret?

"Anything the human mind can believe, the human mind can achieve." *Ibid.*, 176, emphasis in original

17. *Battle Creek Letters*, 79-80

Ellen White—Member of the Board

THE old adage says it well: "No organization is stronger than its Board of Directors." The chances of any organization or institution actually succeeding in its work can be measured in the experience, stability, and wisdom of its board. Of course, that is much easier to say than it is to do. Who, after all, can accurately weigh the inner workings of any person's heart and mind? Who can see the future to know how quickly experience will be gained? Who can measure the ability of an indomitable faith and will to overcome the difficulties brought on by a lack of experience? And who would deny that the Lord can confound the wisdom of the world with the "foolishness" of His will?

But still, no one could intelligently doubt the value of godly, experienced counselors to serve as a Board of Directors. Ellen White knew this well. She knew, too, the heartache that could be caused by unconsecrated directors, men who placed their wisdom above the Lord's instruction. And—as no one else in her day—she knew that instruction. Ellen White would be a natural choice as a board member. How often she was asked to serve in such a capacity is not known. How often she did, and for what enterprise, is—exactly once, for the Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute.

Surrounding this isolated piece of historic trivia is a tale deserving a retelling, for in it we find lessons needed today. After all, the experience of others is a much less costly way to learn than to repeat their mistakes.

The turn of the century held out prospects of new beginnings, progress, advancement. To Seventh-day Adventists, there was the expectation of the ultimate new beginning, but only after the end of all things then existing. A sense of restrained, sometimes confused, excitement pervaded the denomination. Only a few years before, the Lord had indicated that closing events had begun with a clearer proclamation of Christ's righteousness than had been heard for years. The second coming was at hand, surely.

But for some on the "inside," the issues were not nearly so clear. While the average church member remained more or less "blissfully ignorant," those more closely connected to the "great heart of the work" struggled to deal with mounting problems. The General Conference itself was marred by a seeming inability to find its way through the maze of conflicting interests. Then again, perhaps it was the tendency to find its own way, and an inability to find God's

way that was the problem. The situation had reached undeniable crisis proportions when Ellen White wrote from Australia to the General Conference president: "Who can now feel sure that they are safe in respecting the voice of the General Conference Association? If the people in our churches understood the management of the men who walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, would they respect their decisions? I answer, No, not for a moment. I have been shown that the people at large do not know that the heart of the work is being diseased and corrupted at Battle Creek."

In late 1900, she returned to the United States to find reports of strange doings in Indiana, but not till April of 1901 did she directly deal with the "Holy Flesh" teaching of Elders Davis and Donnell. More than a year before, she had been shown that just such fanaticism would come into our camp meetings shortly before the close of probation. Fortunately the immediate problem was quickly resolved as the leaders of the divergent movement accepted the counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy and renounced [temporarily, in the case of R. S. Donnell] their faulty concept of the nature of Christ.

Other challenges at the General Conference of 1901 did not go away so quickly. Though it was voted on April 12 to move Battle Creek College out of Battle Creek, when it came to accomplishing the task, a lingering sense of shock remained to hinder the work. Reorganization seemed a settled matter at the conference close, but cropped up again two years later in divisive contention over the "revising" (others said "reversing") of what was done in 1901.² And through it all was the widening split between the ministry and the large corps of medical missionaries controlled by John Kellogg.

In May of 1904, the last strong effort was made to bring the two factions together in harmony. At a session of the Lake Union Conference, tensions reached the snapping point, and never again would there be such an opportunity for reconciliation. Dr. Kellogg's depressing drift from his former brethren continued until he finally lost his church membership in 1907.³ Was it his fault? Perhaps not completely; humanity is humanity still on both sides of any disagreement, but others' failings make poor reasons for the loss of one's own soul. What is certain is that many influential people *thought* he was right. Loyalties then, as now, too often went to the person, and too often interfered with the task of finding the truth. Many of the medical and educational personnel of the denomination sided to some degree with Kellogg in his teaching of pantheism as well as in his objecting to what he saw as wrongs in denominational policies.⁴ One of the overlooked miracles of the era is the simple fact that so many recovered from their confusion in this regard.

Sutherland and Magan

Among those thus restored to valuable service for the Lord were two ardent men—Edward Alexander Sutherland and Percy Tilden Magan. The two had worked together for several years at Walla Walla College before being called to Battle Creek College in 1897. Their immediate desire was to move the school out of town, but Ellen White counseled delay. In 1901, when she told

them that the moment had come, it was their determination that packed the college into 16 freight cars and moved it 90 miles away to Berrien Springs.⁵

These men were reformers, first and foremost, and as such they felt strong ties to the one who had made the challenge of reform seem worthwhile. From the time he had persuaded them to adopt a vegetarian diet years before, Sutherland and Magan had looked up to Dr. Kellogg. Unfortunately, their support, and that of others, played a large role in steeling him in his defiance at the Lake Union Conference. Only later did the two men shake free from his influence.

That pivotal conference session in May of 1904 was made especially tense by the death of Ida Magan, Percy's wife, on the second day of meetings. Her health had given way under the strain of unjust criticism. After nearly a year's illness, her troubles on earth were over. Not so for her husband. In the heat of the debate—which centered on Kellogg's pantheism, but included a host of other matters—he and Sutherland tendered their resignations from the college, saying that they could no longer work with the General Conference leadership. They planned instead to disappear into the South where they could operate a school on their own without interference.⁶

Ellen White's response to this plan is an amazing example of her willingness to work with her brethren. She did not ostracize them, as she might easily have done; neither did she condone their rashness.

Just hours after their resignation she defended them publicly: "In moving the College from Battle Creek and establishing it in Berrien Springs, Brethren Magan and Sutherland have acted in harmony with the light that God gave. They have worked under great difficulties....

"But who has appreciated the work that has been done in this place? Many have taken an attitude of opposition, and have spoken words that have caused sadness....

'After the [1903] General Conference in Oakland, a report was circulated that Sister White had turned against Brother Magan. There was not a word of truth in this statement. But his poor wife, who had toiled and sacrificed and prayed with him, was informed that Sister White had taken a stand against her husband. Oh, why did ever anyone say such a thing? Sister White never turned against Brother Magan or Brother Sutherland. But Sister Magan was so weighted down with sorrow that she lost her reason.

"I ask, Who in the day of judgment will be held responsible for putting out the light of that mind that should be shining today?...

"She suffered for months, and the husband suffered with her. And now the poor woman has gone, leaving two motherless children. All this because of the work done by unsanctified tongues....

"Brother Sutherland and Brother Magan do not go out from this place as men who have made a failure, but as men who have made a success. They have taught the students from the Bible, according to the light given through the testimonies. The students that have been with them need not be ashamed of the education they have received....

"To the students I would say, You are to let your teachers go willingly. They have had a hard battle here, but they have made a success....

"They think they can better glorify God by going to a more needy field. This is their own choice; I have not persuaded them. They did not know but what Sister White would stand in their way. When they laid the matter before me this morning, I told them I would not hinder them for one moment."*

The two educators sorely needed her public support and encouragement, but they also needed her rebuke. True to duty, she supplied it:

"I have words of counsel for you. There must be harmony between you and the men in responsible positions in the General Conference. You catch at straws in matters concerning Elder Daniells and Elder Prescott. Why? Because they have not harmonized with you in all your plans, and have not given you the credit that you deserved. But when the Lord corrected errors, and spoke encouraging words concerning your efforts, why did you not thank Him, and show your gratitude by manifesting forgiveness, and showing an appreciation of the burdens borne by these fellow workers?...

"Your feelings in regard to Elder Daniells and Elder Prescott are not correct. If you expect them to harmonize with you, you must harmonize with them. The Lord has declared that He will harmonize with Elder Daniells and Elder Prescott. I know of what I am speaking; for these things have been represented to me....

"My brethren, let us now do our best, not to discover wrong in Elder Daniells, but to help him. He has shown himself to be the man for the place. At this time there are needed men who dare to differ with those who are counterworking the plans of the Lord for His people. You have not discerned the true condition of the leaders of the medical missionary work at Battle Creek. You have not placed a correct estimate upon their actions. You have encouraged their ideas and plans altogether too much."⁸

The first years of the new century, so bright with promise, had been hard ones for Ed Sutherland and Percy Magan. In the spring of 1904 they were battered, bruised, saddened—but somewhat wiser than before. Experience had proved a hard taskmaster, but they would need every bit of the wisdom their experience would afford as the Lord charted a course for them into completely new and untested waters.

Heading South

With this thumbnail sketch of the intricacies of their recent experiences, it is easy to see why Sutherland and Magan would want to relocate in a place of seclusion. As far as Adventists were concerned, the South had an abundance of seclusion to offer. Despite twenty years of urging from Ellen White, relatively little work had been begun in the region. To establish themselves in a retired location and begin their work in a quiet, simple manner with a few young students seemed the prudent and desirable thing for the two men to do.

Ellen White did not agree. Although these men had made serious errors, she had no inclination to let them retire from the forefront of the battle and let

their talents go to waste. The church needed schools in the South—why should these men of considerable experience be tied to only a small field of labor when by teaching teachers their influence might extend many times as far? And so it was that Ellen White took considerable pains to involve herself in the initial decision making for the new project.

In early June of 1904, Sutherland and Magan decided to spend some time in the "mountainous district of East Tennessee and the Carolinas, to select a site" for the proposed school. Magan writes that "upon reaching Nashville, we were invited by Sister White and others to spend a short time with them in considering important interests connected with the development of the work centering there.

"It was while we were engaged in the study of these questions that our attention was directed to a large farm near Madison, about nine miles from Nashville. Sister White advised us to give careful consideration to the favorable features of this place, which made it a suitable location for a school such as we desired to start."⁹

Magan concedes that they "shrank from locating" so near to Nashville. They had planned on a more remote site. Ellen White did not press the point—not yet.

Soon it was agreed to take a trip up the Cumberland river on board Edson White's missionary river boat, the *Morning Star*. The goal, aside from a little relaxation from the strain of recent events, was to find a suitable location for the establishment of the proposed school. Sister White wrote, "I shall enjoy the trip, for I have much to say to our party—especially to Brethren Sutherland and Magan, upon the school problem. This opportunity I must improve.")

As the trip progressed, Ellen White became more and more decided that an isolated location for the school was not wise. She stressed the desirability of the workers at the school being close enough to Nashville that they could, at times, unite their efforts with those of the workers in the city.

Eventually it became evident that the cheap land north of Nashville they had heard of didn't exist. The *Morning Star* turned about and began the return journey. More and more, Sister White favored the purchase of the "Ferguson-Nelson place," which she had advised them to consider before. The asking price was just under \$13,000, and included a house, livestock, carriages, farming implements, and the crops in the fields. Not advertised, but very evident, was a more than adequate supply of deep gulches, barren hillsides, and rocks.

As Sister White became more direct in her counsel, the two men faced an uncomfortable situation. They *did not* want to buy the place; it was altogether too large, too expensive, and involved too much work. But the Spirit of Prophecy said their plans were too narrow. What would they do?

When the meaning of it all came crashing down upon them, they sat on a pile of rocks and wept. They had always advocated following the Lord's counsel. In fact they had been critical of others for not doing so. How could they turn back now?¹¹

The Madison School

By the fall of the year, a newly formed organization held sway over the "Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute." From the beginning, Ellen White served as a member of the Board of Directors. It is well that she did, for—despite her presence—this organization was *different*. Unlike any that went before it, it strove to be both *independent from* and *loyal to* the denomination.

It wasn't an easy role. Ellen White never said it would be. But Sutherland and Magan knew from experience that the Lord sometimes asks hard things of His children. They had been through the furnace of misrepresentation and prejudice before; they would find themselves in a similar position again. And, too, they had made mistakes themselves in the past; new temptations lay before them.

Through the hardships and through the joys, they were gaining a valuable experience—one which many could profit from today. The struggles of sincere, yet sometimes erring, men are not new. Still, this story deserves our interest. Not for the keeping of record as to who was at fault, or the casting of recrimination upon men long dead, but for the learning of lessons given of God to our spiritual ancestors.

Relations With the Denomination

When the "Madison school" (as the institution was most commonly known in its early days) came into existence, it met with a mixed response. The relatively few workers of the Southern field were thankful for any help they could get, and a school—especially one intended primarily to train workers for the South—was a real godsend. Still, there were questions, louder and more pronounced the farther north one went, as to the intentions of this group of "renegades." After all, they had done some rather startling things during their time at Berrien Springs.

The abolishing of degrees, for instance. And operating a college on a farm. And having students spend half their time working at a trade. But the biggest question mark was their unfortunately heated resignation and the avowal that they could no longer work with the brethren at the General Conference.¹²

The temptation was strong to cut all ties and let the little group of pioneer educators drift away. To be relieved of their presence seemed the easiest way out of an uncomfortable situation. In fact, it appeared to be the *only* way out, for the conference now had no control of the situation whatever. It was a perplexity, to be sure.

The whole story is not known now. Writing to the "Workers at the Madison School," Sister White counseled, "Silence is eloquence. To open up all matters concerning the beginning of your work at Madison would not be wisdom. I have just received a letter regarding your work, but I cannot now deal with it as I wish. I wish to say to you, Be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves.... It will not be safe to try to make all understand everything. Those things that

are of a private character, you should not make public. Let them be kept within the knowledge of your special few."¹³

We can but imagine how many men in positions of responsibility spent sleepless hours wrestling with the question of how the church should relate to this departure from all "normal" procedure. The same gospel of Luke which says "He that is not against us is for us," (9:50) also says "He that is not with me is against me." (11:23) Which verse would apply? Where did this new school really stand?

A good course to follow would have been to check with the organization's board. Especially might they have asked Ellen White. Perhaps the inquiry was made. Perhaps the strangeness of the situation prevented the answer from really "sinking in."

Whatever the case, during the years of 1906, 1907, and 1908 we find a stream of letters encouraging the workers at Madison, and exhorting the leaders of various conferences to press in to help in the work at Nashville.¹⁴ Often gifts of money were suggested. But there were even more basic needs. Writing to Elder A. G. Daniells, Sister White said:

"Words of instruction were given to me to speak to you and Elder Evans, and Elder Washburn. I said, You have a work to do to encourage the school work in Madison, Tennessee. There are but few teachers among us who have had experience in carrying forward the work in hard places. The workers who have been striving to carry out the mind and will of God in Madison have not received the encouragement they should have had. Unless Brother Sutherland is relieved of some of the pressure that is upon him he will fall under the burden.

"You may ask what is needed. I answer, it is encouragement....

"It is your privilege, Brother Daniells, and the privilege of those who have wide influence in the work, to let these brethren understand that they have your confidence and encouragement in the work they are bravely doing. Brother Sutherland is in a precarious state of health. We cannot afford to lose him.... Means should be appropriated to the needs of the work in Madison, that the labor of the teachers may not be so hard in the future."¹⁵

Efforts at Clarification

The gulf between the two parties was not easily spanned. In November of 1907, C. C. Crisler wrote A. G. Daniells offering his understanding of the difficulty. From later events, it appears that he misapprehended certain points of the situation. Still, his letter offers a valuable insight into the thinking of the day.

Expressing his former concern that some of Sutherland and Magan's ideas "regarding independent work were not fully in accord with the generally accepted views we have held on organization," he explained how he had resolved the dilemma in his own mind:

'As soon as I learned from Professor Sutherland that the original design of himself and his associates to found a new school that would be entirely independent and self-supporting, was not carried out because of instruction through Sister White to maintain a living connection with their brethren, and

to look to their brethren for partial support, a ray of light entered my mind. I thought I could now see a great difference between the school they have established at Madison, and the sort of school they once thought of establishing. At Berrien Springs they were proposing to carry forward, in the Southern field, *independent institutional* work in the manner in which *independent private* work is carried forward by an *individual* not in the employ of any conference. They were counseled not to do this, but to help *individuals*, and *families or groups of individuals* (not *institutions*, please note), to demonstrate the feasibility of carrying on self-supporting work as self-supporting Seventh-day Adventist missionaries. Those whom Professor Sutherland and his associates were to train, were to establish *small centers of influence*, NOT TRAINING SCHOOLS, on a self-supporting basis.¹⁶ (All emphasis his.)

Exactly what "great difference" Brother Crisler thought he saw as the result of Ellen White's counsel is at best obscure. It is certain, though, that his idea of limiting the school's work to training individuals in missionary service, but not establishing training schools, fell far short of Ellen White's desires. She wrote:

"Every possible means should be devised to establish schools on the Madison order in various parts of the South.... If many more in other schools were receiving a similar training, we as a people would become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. The message would be carried to every country, and souls now in darkness would be brought to the light.""

"Every possible means" was probably used, at least by the workers at Madison, and by 1909 thirteen rural schools were educating more than 500 children. In the years to come, more than forty such enterprises were established, some of which—contradicting Brother Crisler's expectations—clearly deserve the title "training school."

Brother Crisler's misunderstanding of Madison's work is not mentioned to detract from his intelligence or dedication to the Lord's work, but to point out how difficult it was for good men, even those working closely with Ellen White (Crisler worked at that time as one of her literary assistants), to understand how this new entity could fit into the denominational scheme of things.

Still, when he wrote Elder Daniells, he brought to light one valid problem area: "There is one position taken by the members of the Madison faculty, that is often misunderstood—and possibly not always without cause, because of the use of certain terms in attempting to express the idea. This position is with regard to conditions that may prevail in the future, at the time when thousands, with faces lighted up with holy joy, will go forth into all parts of the earth to proclaim the message.

"The brethren at Madison hold that as the time of the end approaches, more and still more self-supporting work will be done by consecrated men and women.... Thousands will go forth into all parts of the world because they are impelled by the Spirit of God to go. They will go, not as disorganized integers, but as members of one united body; yet they will at times be isolated from their fellows, and will be compelled to look to God alone as their

Counselor. While laboring in harmony with their brethren elsewhere, they will not look to any organized body for support, but will trust in God to supply their necessities....

"Of course, we cannot now foresee just how this will be done in detail, in every instance, in a time when it will have become almost impossible to keep in communication with all the various parts of our organization. As we enter these times, the Lord who has taught and led us thus far will surely show us the right way....

"It is my conviction that the less we say now about how we may find things in the future, with regard to forms of organization, the better it will be."¹⁸

We have here some good advice which might profitably be considered even today. When we go beyond the clear, definite teachings of Scripture, and begin to fill in details of which we have no sure knowledge, "guessing" on this point and that, we inevitably produce faulty speculations which, in Ellen White's words, would "better be strangled in the cradle."¹⁹

Considering Adventism's rightful emphasis on the end of all things, and especially taking into account the turmoil of a few years before concerning Sunday laws in various states, it is not difficult to see how the attention of the Madison faculty would be focused on the closing up of this world's history. But to attempt to explain just how the Lord's work will be carried out under the conditions of "a time of trouble such as never was," is to invite misunderstanding. Such an effort may be prompted by motives as "harmless as a dove," but it falls far short of being as "wise as a serpent."

Brother Crisler 's best efforts were unable to resolve—or even fully identify—the issues which caused the brethren to remain somewhat aloof from the group at Madison. But a clearer understanding was not long in coming. On September 23, 1907, Ellen White provided a much more accurate analysis of the difficulty. Her letter was addressed to two officers of the General Conference:

The Question of Ownership

"The Lord has instructed me that, from the first, the work in Huntsville and Madison should have received adequate help. But instead of this help being rendered promptly, there has been long delay. And in the matter of the Madison school, there has been a standing off from them because they were not under the ownership and control of some conference. This is a question that should sometimes be considered, but it is not the Lord's plan that means should be withheld from Madison, because they are not bound to the conference. The attitude which some of our brethren have assumed toward this enterprise shows that it is not wise for every working agency to be under the dictation of conference officers. There are some enterprises under certain conditions, that will produce better results if standing alone.

"When my advice was asked in reference to the Madison school, I said, Remain as you are. There is a danger in binding every working agency under the dictation of the conference. The Lord did not design that this should be. The circumstances were such that the burden bearers in the

Madison School could not bind up their work with the conference. I knew their situation, and when many of the leading men in our conferences ignored them, because they did not place their school under conference dictation, I was shown that they would not be helped by making themselves amenable to the conference. They had better remain as led by God, amenable to Him to work out His plans."²⁰

It was difficult for men to understand how they might co-operate with and even support an endeavor over which they held no control. Perhaps it involved a certain amount of fear—fear of the unknown, the unpredictable. Perhaps it involved pride. We may never know, nor is it necessary that we should. After all, the Lord is the judge of such matters.

But still we may learn from the experience. It would be well to ponder what our own reactions might have been had we been involved with these events. Would we have sided with those who withheld their support from a school about which the Lord's messenger could write:

"The work that the laborers have accomplished at Madison has done more to give a correct knowledge of what an all-round education means than any other school that has been established by Seventh-day Adventists in America. The Lord has given these teachers in the South an education that is of highest value, and it is a training that God will be pleased to have all our youth receive."²¹

What would we have done? Where would our influence have been felt? These questions are hypothetical, of course. But they deserve our thought. We should ponder the past often, for; speculate as we may, we know not what the future holds.

1. *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 35

2. 1903 *General Conference Bulletin*, 145-173,

3. Richard Schwarz, *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.*, Southern Publishing Association, (1970), 189-190; Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History*, Southern Publishing Association, (1975), 230-233

4. Emmett K. Vande Vere, *Rugged Heart: The Story of George I. Butler*, Southern Publishing Association, (1979), 117; Richard Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, (1979), 292

5. Emmett K. Vande Vere, *The Wisdom Seekers*, Southern Publishing Association, (1972), 90-98

6. Vande Vere, *Rugged Heart*, 118

7. *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 352-354

8. *Ibid.*, 361-363

9. *The Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute*, Pacific Press Publishing Company, (1908), 6

10. A. L. White, *The Early Elmshaven Years*, 342

11. A. Hanson, *From So Small a Dream*, Southern Publishing Association, (1968), 165

12. See Vande Vere, *The Wisdom Seekers*, 80-118

13. *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 393

14. See *Ibid.*, 375-376, 385-389, 391-393, 395-396, 398-403, 410-412, and on

15. *Ibid.*, 395-396

16. C. C. Crisler, *The Value of Organization*, The Elmshaven Press, (1914), 38-39

17. *Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, 423

18. Crisler 42-43

19. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1064

20. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, 202-203

21. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 182

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Edward Alexander Sutherland on Madison Graduates

No educational endeavor can be properly evaluated without a consideration of its product. While other lines of work result in manufactured goods, services rendered, or information gained, the work of education produces students. What is the effect of their learning experiences? What are their skills? What level of that indefinable quality we call "maturity" do they possess? These are the questions E. A. Sutherland addressed when he wrote the following piece in 1908.

DURING our first year at Madison, two of our young men were impressed by the Lord to go to Cuba to start a mission farm school. We had done what we could to prepare them to enter upon such a mission, yet we wondered if they would succeed. We were compelled now to submit to this test of our training; for the young men were determined to go. They sold what little personal property they could spare, but they did not have money enough to pay their passage. For nearly a month we as a school prayed that if the Lord wanted them to go, He would send the money. About Christmas time one of our teachers received unexpectedly the sum of fifty dollars, sent in return for a personal favor rendered some years ago. Coming as it did, it was considered as an answer to the prayers for passage money for the boys.

These self-supporting missionaries from the Madison school were

Calvin Kinsman and Oren Wolcott. I can safely state that the names of these two young men were mentioned daily in our chapel prayers for months, we felt so anxious for their success.

They landed at Havana with a trifle more than ten dollars between them, but they had no difficulty in finding work in carpentry, a trade they had learned in the school, and they were soon earning good wages. One of them was soon foreman of a bridge crew, earning three and a half dollars a day. Their evenings and spare time were spent in learning the Spanish language and observing the customs of the people.

After they had worked in this manner for almost one year, they traveled in company with Elder E. W. Snyder, superintendent of the Seventh-day Adventist mission in Cuba, through a portion of the island to look for a school site. Several places were offered them. Elder Snyder

was very kind to them, and through his assistance they made friends with a Roman Catholic gentleman, Mr. Agramonte, a native Cuban, who gave them thirty acres of land with the understanding that they were to conduct a school for his children and the children of the neighborhood. When these young men were ready to open their school, two of our young women student-teachers joined them, entering into life-partnership with them.

Some of the friends of these teachers were anxious to assist them in erecting a schoolhouse, and five hundred dollars was pledged. The Madison school then agreed to loan the Cuban school this amount, and wait for the money until the pledges were paid. Nearly all of these pledges are now in, and the little school at Neuvitas has enjoyed the use of the school building over a year.

Elder Snyder, who had been a missionary in South America, appreciated the practical education these young men had had, and in a recent letter to us he wrote:

"I am glad to say that I have had the opportunity of visiting our new school at Neuvitas; and it was a source of inspiration to me to hear the favorable comments concerning their work, especially from the owner of the colony, Mr. Agramonte. He thanked me for directing them to that place, and assured me that if he had a dozen such families, the success of the colony would be assured. Apparently, he is as much interested in their success as we are; and he told me that if they needed money to equip any industrial feature of

their school, he would advance it. The neighbors seem very glad that they are there, and I believe there are a number ready to listen to Bible study. While I was there, we held one meeting with good interest, and I wish it was so that I could stay there some time.

"In reference to my interest in their work, [I] will say that I do not see how yours can be much greater than mine. I realize that in the future the establishment of other schools in Cuba will largely depend upon the success of their school. Many such schools are needed in Cuba. I have several places in mind now, but not having any teachers, have had no definite proposition to make to the interested parties."...

A little over a year ago two more of our young men, Brethren Charles Alden and Braiden Mulford, felt that the time had come for them to establish a mission farm school....

I will relate, though it must be briefly, some of the interesting experiences that these teachers have had. We emphasize the importance of a medical missionary training, as an entering wedge for pioneer workers. The value of such training was demonstrated by the school at Ridgetop.

In visiting among the neighbors, the teachers found a woman who had been suffering a long time, and was bedridden. She had been told that she was dying with tuberculosis. The sisters desired to make her more comfortable and to help her spiritually. They found her room poorly ventilated, windows and doors closed nearly all the time, the room overheated, and her food unsuitable for a sick person, or for a

well one either, for that matter. With a little tact they won her confidence, and she allowed them to prepare some simple food for her. While they were busy with these things, they quietly suggested that it would be well to let in a little fresh air. At first she remonstrated, fearing she would take cold. They explained to her the necessity of breathing fresh air, and by kindness and firmness they soon made quite a revolution in her manner of life. The food that they prepared she enjoyed, and soon began to gain strength. In a few weeks she was able to walk a mile. She gave up the notion of dying, and today she is well and strong. Her trouble was not tuberculosis, but was largely due to her wrong habits of living. This circumstance was noised abroad, and opened the way for a large amount of medical missionary work in the surrounding country....

One of their neighbors severely injured himself with an ax. The young men at the school felt that this was an opportunity to prepare this man's soul for some of the seeds of the third angel's message. They gave him treatment, plowed his land, and put in his crop. He remonstrated at first, thinking that they would bring in a big bill of expense. This man could not understand how Yankees would do so much without extracting all the money possible from him, for this had often been his experience with

Northern people. It did not take long, however, to convince him that our brethren had other motives.

A few weeks after his accident, a man was in the neighborhood on Sunday, spying about the school farm to see if he could catch some of "them Advents" at work. He proposed to report them to the Grand Jury, for this would bring him a nice sum of money. This spy happened to fall in with the neighbor whose crop had been put in when he was suffering from the accident. He became very much incensed, and told the man that if he ever heard of his being in the neighborhood again on such an errand, he would notify his neighbors, and they would give him the contents of a bucket of warm tar and a featherbed, and upon a chestnut rail they would ride him out of the community. So we see that while our teachers had no thought of being benefited financially in the assistance they gave this man, no one can tell how many dollars in fines and costs they were saved by the frightening away of this one enemy.

By such experiences, prejudice against this little band of workers, who are known among their neighbors as "the Advents from the industrial school at Madison," is being broken down.

The Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute, 27-32

CHAPTER THIRTY.-FOUR

Exercises in Futility

HAVE you ever had that sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach that signals failure? The sure sign that your efforts just haven't accomplished what you had hoped they would. Sometimes it steals gradually over you, like the fog rolling quietly in through the dark of night. Then again, it may come with all the subtlety of a bomb blast, shattering long-cherished ambitions into irrecoverable oblivion.

It isn't pleasant. Fortunately the Christian may take consolation in knowing that the Lord brings to us only those experiences which are needful. But still, it isn't pleasant.

A little reflection, however, points out the even greater frustration which must be experienced by those who have lost the assurance of God's blessing. The sting of personal humiliation and defeat added to the guilt of an outraged conscience is strong medicine which the Lord administers reluctantly. Such drastic measures are reserved for those whom the Lord loves, but who have steadfastly ignored a thousand lesser entreaties to walk in the path appointed them by God. Sadly though, the treatment of last resort is often despised and taken as the supposed "reason" for the final, irrevocable hardening of heart as the soul plunges to its ruin.

Exercises in futility. Such silly ways we humans choose to ruin ourselves. You'd think we'd learn—but the evidence says we don't.

Battle Creek saw a memorable string of such failed efforts in the early years of this century. Parts of the story—such as the "iceberg vision"—have found a place among the confirmed classics of Adventist history and are familiar to many church members. Other tales, lesser known and seldom recounted, drive the lessons home to all who are willing to listen.

The difficulties, though they had roots reaching back at least 20 years, began climbing towards the crisis point when Dr. Kellogg's *The Living Temple* made its appearance in 1902. The doctor and those who supported him felt that the book was fine; the majority of the General Conference Committee objected to its unBiblical teachings and canceled their former plan of selling 500,000 copies through church channels.

There was talk of revising the book, since Dr. Kellogg desperately needed the profits, but after several "revisions" the core teaching of pantheism still remained. Opinions became solidified on both sides of the question, and tension rose. By October of 1903, most Adventist physicians had rallied to

Kellogg's support. Too, there were a number of prominent educational and ministerial workers who, for a variety of reasons, supported the "new philosophy" as it was called.

For those who opposed Kellogg's views, the outlook was grim, and worsening. The climax came at a special meeting of church leaders held in Washington, D.C., in the fall of 1903. Normal business proceedings came to a standstill as the proponents of *The Living Temple* aggressively lobbied for its acceptance by the church.

And then a package of letters arrived from a little gray-haired lady in California who had dreamed of a ship striking an iceberg. It was time to "meet it," and *The Living Temple* died away as its advocates confessed that the Lord had spoken through those timely letters.

Efforts to Discredit Ellen White

But such admissions did little to change hearts which were steeled against the Lord's leading. Back at Battle Creek things continued to simmer, but at least one lesson had been learned—Ellen White, despite her years, still had influence in Adventism. The solution was obvious: discredit her.

And so began a work of slander and deception which plagues us yet today. Dr. Kellogg, perhaps really believing his god-in-everything doctrine, began to make little comments. Not comments that would find their way into print, mind you, but just a word here and there as opportunity presented itself. To a good Adventist brother of means from Wisconsin, for instance, he confided that Ellen White's Testimonies weren't really all that important. "We don't need them. We all have the same within us, and we need no middleman."¹

Such insinuations spread like wildfire. By October of 1905, A. G. Daniells could write: "There is a steady, secret, stealthy influence at work all through our ranks to create doubt regarding the messages [of the spirit of prophecy] now coming to this people.... Our General Conference brethren who attended the camp meetings...met it everywhere. It is working like leaven, or a deadly contagion."²

Often this work was done, not by attacking Sister White, but only by reducing the dependability of the "Testimonies." One of the favorite complaints was that W. C. White was a behind-the-scenes manipulator. Evidently fearing that the Lord couldn't take care of His own prophet, some kind soul let Ellen White in on the secret. Her response?

"I learn reports are circulated that W. C. White manipulates his mother's writings.

'All have known how much W C. White manipulates his mother's writings, when he has been separated from me very much of the time for the years before this year 1905, and we have, when we could get together, planned much and done so little in issuing books. But I utterly deny the charges."³

Such words would satisfy any who placed confidence in Ellen White, but some who felt they knew better decided to put her to the test.

About this time there was a complicated legal struggle going on over the Battle Creek "Dime Tabernacle." Again, the advantage of surprise was denied those who were in the wrong, since Ellen White knew all about it well in advance: "I have seen that the leaders in the medical work in Battle Creek will try to secure possession of the Tabernacle. Their scheming is so subtle that I greatly fear that this may be accomplished."⁴

'According to the light given me, unless a decided stand is taken to safeguard the Tabernacle in Battle Creek, theories will be presented in it that will dishonor God and His cause....

"I must act in accordance with the light the Lord has given me; and I say to you that Elder A. T. Jones and Dr. Kellogg will make every effort possible to get possession of the Tabernacle, in order that in it they may present their doctrines. We must not allow that house to be used for the promulgation of error until our work is done in Battle Creek. The Tabernacle was built by the Seventh-day Adventist people. It is their property, and their loyal representatives should control it. On this question I will stand firm."⁵

The legal maneuvering for control of the Tabernacle proceeded in secret. There was still that thorny problem of Ellen White's influence. If only that could be resolved, then opposition to the Sanitarium's annexing of the Tabernacle would be well nigh silenced. But what to do?

A key player in the Battle Creek drama had the answer. All that was needed to discredit the spirit of prophecy was one undeniably false Testimony. Just one, but preferably one that showed that Ellen White could be influenced, and better yet if it had the smack of injustice.

An Anonymous Letter

And so it was that a mysterious letter arrived in California. Dated February 15, 1907, it offered Ellen White something she was used to receiving—inside information, but this time the source was different. In fact, there was no source. The letter was signed merely, "A friend of the cause."

It was written in the fashion of the best detective novel, and told how Ellen White's own nephew, F. E. Belden, had sold out to Dr. Kellogg. Now it was no secret that Belden had wandered far from the Lord. Ellen White had pled with him many a time to retrace his steps, but never before had she heard that he was accepting bribes for his part in ensuring a favorable verdict from a fifteen-man committee on which he had served during an investigation of Kellogg's Michigan Benevolent Association.

The letter spoke of regular payments over a period of months, and of one in particular. On first examination this information might appear helpful. What else would show so well the perfidy of those who were just then engaged in an effort to steal away the Tabernacle? We might expect Ellen White to act at once with such an advantage on her side. Surely a Testimony based on this information would help settle the confusion at Battle Creek. So reasoned the author of the letter. And he waited expectantly, for he knew one

thing he had neglected to mention—it was all a lie; there never had been such a payment.

What a story it would have made! Misguided prophet writes false Testimony based on hearsay evidence! But it wasn't to be. Ellen White had no interest in such help. She had her instructions from One who never erred—what need was there to speak that which she had not been shown?

In Battle Creek, the anonymous letter writer—believed to be none other than F. E. Belden himself—found things going poorly. The hoped-for Testimony never came, and evidence showing conclusively that the Sanitarium trustees were maneuvering to gain control of the Tabernacle had been given to Elder M. N. Campbell.

Now in a position to move ahead, Campbell began the public proceedings necessary to place the ownership of the Tabernacle in the hands of the West Michigan Conference. Such a course had never been followed before, but it seemed a much better option than leaving it for Kellogg to take. Despite his disappointment, Belden continued to play the key role as spokesman for the Sanitarium faction. At the first meeting he spent much of the time shouting accusations. At the second, he objected to every step of the process, speaking thirty-four times and taking the allowable five minutes each time.

On the afternoon of March 14, 1907, as the final meeting drew on, Elder Campbell called a group of men together for prayer. George Amadon, an acquaintance of Sister White's since the fall of 1853, repeated again and again, "Oh, if only Sister White were here. If only Sister White were here." But she wasn't, of course. They all knew she was in California. Still, Amadon continued to moan, "If only Sister White were here."

Ten minutes before the meeting began, a knock at the door broke the stillness. "Is Mr. Campbell here?" asked the boy from Western Union. The telegram, the shortest Testimony on record, read simply, "Philippians 1:27-28. (Signed) Ellen G. White."

As the meeting began, they opened their Bibles and read: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God."

Though "there was a persistent and unreasonable opposition to every step taken," by 11:15 that night the work was done and the final vote taken. The Battle Creek Tabernacle would not be used for the promulgation of pantheism, after all.

And so it went. Talented men, gifted men, conducting exercises in futility, refusing to acknowledge their wrong, pressing persistently on in their own faulty course to the destruction of their souls. And dragging others with them. What excuse will these men offer in the day of accounting? We can only look back, ponder the perversity of their deception, and marvel.

But even today the futility of evil holds an enchantment for some. Incredible as it may seem, we have those among us who claim to see great value in the misguided statements of the extinguished "bright lights" from years ago.

There are those today who assert that Kellogg and Belden were right and that Ellen White was wrong. They explain in knowing fashion that W. C. White and others manipulated the Testimonies, that she was influenced by what she heard, that Dr. Kellogg was driven from the church by those who sought unlimited power.

The simple truth of history, it seems, will surely be demonstrated again: how little we learn, how futile our fallacies.

1. Milton Hook, *Flames Over Battle Creek*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, (1977), 112-122
2. See A. L. White, *The Later Elmshaven Years*, 61
3. *Ibid.*, 62
4. *The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters*, 332
5. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 214

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

Anonymous Letter to Ellen G. White

In 1907 Battle Creek was the scene of a bitter conflict over the control of the large "Dime Tabernacle." This skirmish was really just one aspect of a larger struggle which rocked Adventism at that time. Though it was commonly believed that Dr. John Harvey Kellogg was behind much of what was being done, the actual deeds were done by others. One notable participant was Frank Belden, the nephew of Ellen White. The following letter—about Belden—is believed to have been written by Belden himself.

DEAR Sister White:
The Committee of Fifteen, that was appointed by the Michigan Benevolent Association to investigate Sanitarium affairs, etc., has made a report favorable to the management of the medical work, and it may be of interest and importance that you and others know concerning some of the facts.

Professor E E. Belden has, during the investigation, been paid for his time by checks each week direct from the Modern Medicine Publishing Company, (J. H. Kellogg, President, W. K. Kellogg, Manager), and has during that time received other checks and cash not for time spent in behalf of the Modern Medicine Company.

The strangest of all is that one morning shortly after the Committee of Fifteen had reported, Dr. Kellogg ordered a check filled out for \$1,324.08, and sent out to his house so that he could sign it, and on the

afternoon of the very same day E E. Belden's bank book (left among other things on his desk while he was absent for a short time), showed the same identical figures (\$1,324.08), entered by the bank on the credit side of his account there.

In this connection should be remembered the fact that Brother Belden refused to act on the Committee at one time, and so stated in the *Review*, about October 12, 1906; yet he has gone on with the work since returning to Battle Creek in November, and has signed the report with the other members. Now this check and bank credit incident occurs in addition to the fact that he received his regular weekly wages from the Modern Medicine Publishing Company, and also special checks and cash payments during the progress of the work of the Committee.

I will send this to you care of G. W. Amadon and Elder Campbell, and on a separate slip will let them

know the name of a reliable party whom I designate as (R) who in the forenoon referred to saw the check which was made out, and who in the afternoon, saw the very same figures on the credit side of the bank book mentioned.

The party to whom I refer as (R) will affirm my statement when asked about it by Brother Amadon, and will also refer him to another person (N), who also saw both the check and the bank book entry. He is a friend of Professor Belden, and so am I, but we care more for the prosperity of the cause of truth than to uphold or shield any individual in wrong doing. The names of (R) and (N) are not to be known to any persons except Brethren Amadon, Campbell, W. C. White, and Sister White.

Further, I heard Brother Belden and Elder A. I Jones and another brother talking about the two last named persons putting in their letters requesting membership in the Battle Creek [Church] very soon, in which case they could, of course, take a hand in the struggle that is going on here over deeding the Tabernacle to the Michigan Conference or to the General Conference. Brother Belden plainly says he will oppose either plan. Can there be any reason why Brethren Jones and - - - should just now secure a transfer of church membership here, except to help defeat the wishes of those at the head of the work? The trustees here, and perhaps all the church should know the exact situation, and be able to act rightly on such an issue. It certainly looks strange when men keep their mem-

bership in other churches for years and then a stir is made over the question of their letters at such a time as this.

Another peculiar situation is that parties have agreed to recommend for positions on the Church Board here as soon as possible, Brethren Belden and G. W. Morse, who are both more or less connected with Sanitarium work, or are working for Dr. Kellogg personally. This would certainly appear as an indication confirming the reports that the Sanitarium wishes to control the Tabernacle, if not get possession of the title itself, as I understand has been claimed by some that they desire to do.

Of course, the banks would give no information concerning this matter of the check, or of the credits of F. E. Belden, unless they were put upon a witness stand and required to do so. This of course it would not seem best to attempt, as the matter would be denied probably, and nothing but a legal investigation could draw out the exact facts; but with as many points in your possession as this letter contains, and the same confirmed by (R) and (N) privately, who do not wish their names mixed up in the affair, it may be that Sister White or others may feel it their duty to put the Church on guard at least with reference to Brethren Belden or Morse being allowed any position on the Church Board, or as members of any special committees pertaining to the Tabernacle transfer question.

Whether I am the person herein designated as (N) or not, makes no difference, as the verification of

these statements by (R) who knows the exact truth will be all-sufficient. I write this in behalf of the Cause of God, but withhold my name so that these facts only shall reach you, and no one be able to charge that Brother

So-and-so reported them. (R) will verify them on request.

Yours in behalf of the Truth,

A Friend of the Cause

As promised, a separate sheet specified the identity of (R). It read as follows:

THE party referred to as (R), is Mrs. Riggs, sister of W A. Colcord of Washington, D.C. She has been bookkeeper for the Modern Medicine Company for several years, but has just resigned her posi-

tion for good reasons. She will tell you who is referred to by (N) in the accompanying letter.

E. G. White Estate Document File
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CHAPTER THIRTY SIX

With Friends Like These....

ELLEN White was a kindly soul. At least the records of history indicate that many were willing enough to call her their friend. And we can but believe she was glad to return the favor. Of course she had her special friends, those whom she had known longer, or had been closer to, or had a particular interest in. And too, she experienced the sting of friends who proved unfaithful.

She had more than her fair share of disappointments in this matter of friends. After all, the prophetic office can be rather perplexing to non-prophets. In fact, the list of those who at one time or another stumbled over their inability to comprehend the work to which she was called would most likely include all her friends. Sometimes these difficulties were easily resolved; sometimes they weren't.

Most of Mrs. White's friends recovered from their confusion, though it often required patient and persistent effort on her part to assist them. There were, however, those who allowed their differences to break the ties of friendship and Christian fellowship forever. Men such as Dudley Canright, and John Kellogg, who had known the motherly concern of this godly woman, but who later chose a path diverging from hers.

It seems a universal law in human relations that the closer the tie, the greater the potential either for joy or for sorrow. We can but imagine the pain she must have felt while watching these promising individuals—who owed so much to James and Ellen White—turn against the truths they had once loved. And turn against her.

We might consider as well the case of A. T Jones—who as a young minister knew the support and hearty co-operation of Ellen White in a manner few others ever experienced, and yet in later years would put into print the claim that she permitted "prejudiced gossip" to influence her:

"It was not true, but she believed it. And believing it, and her mind being agitated by her believing it, the communication [Ellen White's letter] said that in the night things 'were opened' to her.... And the unquestionable facts in the case make it certain that on the mere prejudiced report of a man, a communication was issued as a Testimony, because of that report of 'a member of the board,' and of things 'opened' to her in the night seasons—a communication as a Testimony, whose basic premise was not in any sense nor on any ground true; and which of itself was afterward reversed, by another communication [from Ellen White]."

The problem with Jones' argument is that the letters he refers to—but never quotes from—just don't say what he says they do.² A most unfortunate oversight, and a serious misrepresentation for one who had formerly worked in close connection with, and manifested firm confidence in, the subject of his pointed remarks.

But, sadly, we must all learn the lesson that not every friend is a true friend. And here the matter can become most confusing. A. T Jones was—if nothing else—forthright and open in publishing his criticism and slander. Not that it should have been published, but at least he was willing to take the responsibility for what he said.

Not all ex-friends are so direct. Many times it is deemed expedient to retain the façade of professed friendship while one is steadily working behind the scenes to malign the one who deserves support. Such tactics are often hard to counteract because of the difficulty of pointing out what is happening without appearing to be maliciously undermining the guilty party.

Christ Himself experienced this problem with Judas. The appearance was maintained to the very end, and the Lord of glory was betrayed with a hypocritical kiss. Fortunately for us, inspiration enabled the writers of the gospels to see through this pretension and present to us a reliable and accurate account of the facts.

Of course, sometimes modern day Judases make little mistakes; they talk too much to someone who has enough integrity to speak up in defense of the one being maligned. Dr Kellogg found that out the hard way. For years he managed to keep his hostility to Ellen White a step or two away from the open stage. He found helpers, willing assistants to carry out his schemes in their names so that he could keep a relatively clean public image.³ But it seems he failed to seriously consider that he was dealing with more than human wisdom:

"I have recently received two letters from Dr. Kellogg. He strongly urges me to come to Battle Creek, offering to pay all the expenses of the journey. He thinks that I will be favorably impressed if I can see for myself the conditions existing in Battle Creek.

"But I do see matters for myself. Night after night scenes are presented before me that reveal a strange condition of things. While Dr. Kellogg has made some admissions, he has not yet gone to the root of the evils for which he has been responsible.

'At the General Conference held in Oakland [in 1903], Dr. Kellogg gave an exhibition of himself that revealed the spirit that controlled him. Long before that meeting he was presented to me as a man who understood not the spirit that controlled him. The enemy of souls had cast upon him a spell of deception."⁴

Yes, Ellen White had some interesting "friends." And though there are but few still living who knew her personally, the story hasn't ended yet. In recent years she has found new "friends," and—as might be expected—they are a varied lot. Many resemble her true-hearted friends of years ago; some do not. It is the latter group to whom we will direct our attention just now.

Charges of Manipulation

Professing great concern for the purity of her writings, these "friends" of Ellen White have of late advanced ideas which sound disturbingly similar to the pet theories of her *enemies* from decades back. The most popular of these is the somebody-changed-the-Testimonies theory.

Of course, there are variations on the theme. It can, if one so wishes, be made to incriminate W. C. White (the prime culprit), A. G. Daniells, Uriah Smith, or W W Prescott.

Some people now claim not only that the Testimonies were influenced before they were published, but also that there have been hundreds, even thousands of changes since first appearing in print.

Those who advocate this incredible notion fail to explain how this all happened without Ellen White ever realizing it. They admit that they "can only wonder why the Lord did not reveal" this to her.

Could it be that there was nothing to reveal? After all, the Lord had already demonstrated His ability to direct His messenger in regard to her literary assistants. In the 1870s Mary Clough—the daughter of Ellen White's sister, Caroline, an apparently sincere Christian though not a Seventh-day Adventist—worked for a time as a copyist for her aunt. Sister White commented that Mary is "the best copyist I can ever have."⁵ Yet, as time passed, and Mary declined to accept the truths to which she was exposed, the Lord indicated that she was no longer to be connected with Ellen White. Why? "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned."

Even more marked was the drawn-out drama of Fannie Bolton in the 1890s. Fannie was good help, except that she suffered from the idea that she could improve Ellen White's writing. But the Lord disagreed, and told His messenger about it. After coming to a crisis point on five different occasions, and having been assigned work that precluded the possibility of her editorializing, Fannie elected to leave Mrs. White's employ.

Was Mrs. White nonchalant about all this? Unaware? Hardly! In fact, she made her opinions very clear:

"I do not want any person who will feel it her prerogative to change the matter I shall give them into their own supposed beautiful, learned language. I want my own style to appear in my own words."⁷ "She is a farce."

Making of None Effect

Of special interest is Fannie's claim that she was responsible for portions of what some mistakenly believed to be the "spirit of prophecy." Ellen White's response: "She could represent me and my work as her originating, that this 'beautiful expression' was hers, and that was hers, and [she would] *make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God.*"⁹

Sound familiar? "The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God."¹⁰ Now then, what are these well meaning "friends" of Ellen White really accomplishing with their charges of

changes? Was Ellen White really so naïve as to let these things go on behind her back? Did the Lord suddenly lose interest in His messages to us? How does one explain Ellen White's last will and testament, in which she appointed the chief "culprits" members of the Board of Directors of her estate?

"If God reproves His people through an individual, He does not leave the one corrected to guess at matters, and the message to be corrupted in reaching the person it is designed to correct. God gives the message and then takes especial care that it is not corrupted."¹¹

Once again, just as it was years ago, it may be said of Sister White's "friends":

"Very adroitly some have been working to make of no effect the Testimonies of warning and reproof that have stood the test for half a century. At the same time, they deny doing any such thing."¹²

Where will it end? Without inspired foresight we cannot be certain. The probability is that souls will be lost, but not because of these "changes" any more than the "mistakes" in the Bible:

"Some look at us gravely and say, 'Don't you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?' This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the Inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God.... All the mistakes will not cause trouble to one soul, or cause any feet to stumble, that would not manufacture difficulties from the plainest revealed truth."¹³

No, the souls lost will not be because of the "changes," but because of their own loss of faith in the Lord's chosen instrumentality for leading and correcting His church. The one useful purpose such theories serve is that of providing a convenient gathering point for those not in harmony with the Lord's will. We may expect to see all manner of apostasy attracted to the proposition of doing away with certain "undesirable" portions of the spirit of prophecy. But that should be no real surprise; Ellen White's "friends" did all that years ago.

Which leaves just one question: With friends like these, who needs enemies?

1. A. T Jones, *Some History, Some Experience, and Some Facts*, 58; Please note that the full text of this booklet is available from Leaves-of-Autumn Books. Edited versions have been distributed by various publishers, some of which are misleading since they have deleted all Jones' attacks upon Ellen White.

2. See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *A Statement Refuting Charges Made by A. T Jones*, (1906), 62-75

3. Charles E. Stewart and Frank E. Belden were two of his most trusted lieutenants. See *A Response to An Urgent Testimony*, The Liberty Missionary Society, Battle Creek, Michigan, (1907), and related documents in E. G. White Estate Document File 213

4. *Battle Creek Letters*, 101

5. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 106

6. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 457

7. *The Fannie Bolton Story* (E. G. White Estate Manuscript Release 926), 56

8. *Ibid.*, 96

9. *Ibid.*, 55, emphasis supplied

10. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 48

11. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 6, 333

12. *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, 31

13. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 16

Considerations on the Work at Loma Linda

In April 1908 Elder J. A. Burden, the founder of Loma Linda Sanitarium and the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University), wrote a letter to Dr. W. A. Ruble in which he explained the situation in California.

AS the Legislature of California has opened the way for the students of such a school as the Loma Linda College of Evangelists to be legally recognized to practice sanitarium methods of healing, or rational remedies, some have felt that it would be wise to have the school chartered under the law that such students as complete the entire three years' course and whose qualifications enable them to pass the state examinations, might be free to work as other recognized physicians, i.e., they could hold positions in our institutions and comply with all the requirements of the law...otherwise no matter how well qualified they may be to do the work, they would of necessity have to labor as nurses under the direction of legally qualified physicians.

Our understanding of the Testimonies is that, while thousands are to be quickly qualified for thorough medical-evangelistic work, some must qualify to labor as physicians. We have been instructed again and again to make the school as strong as

possible for the qualification of nurses and physicians; and the opening of a way for its recognition, with no thought or effort on our part, and especially in view of the fact that California heretofore had been one of the most difficult states for medical practitioners to gain recognition in, seemed to us a divine providence, coming as it did the next year after we had started our school.

The battle was fought by the osteopaths, but the Legislature then threw the gate wide open for any school whose requirements for entrance to the medical course were equal to a high school preparation on the ten fundamental branches that underlie medical education. Materia medica and surgery are both thrown out, so that a good, thorough school of hygiene or rational practice of medicine would have no difficulty in being recognized in this state. And should our school be recognized here, its students would have a vantage ground from which to secure recognition in other states, the same as the osteopaths are being recognized.

Their healing art is fast being recognized in all the states, but they have had to fight their way to the front with everything against them. Their opening the way will evidently make it easier, for a time at least, for other reputable methods of healing to become recognized.

It certainly was a great misfortune that the American Medical Missionary College was launched under cover of the regular schools rather than under the banner of the healing art embodied in the third angel's message. And it seems to some of us that we shall make the same mistake they did if we undertake to follow their example in establishing a medical school whose very standard, if it is at all maintained, means commercialism from first to last, or else the students who graduate from the school will lose their caste and standing with those who are following the medical practice of the present day.

Not so with a new school which makes its own standard and wins its way by its merit; and that standard, if we understand the messages coming to us, is missionary, warp and woof, with the mercenary spirit entirely eliminated. Hence the name chosen, Medical Evangelists.

We should like to be present at your councils and hear your discussion of this question. It is extremely interesting to us, from the fact that we have had to face the issue and set ourselves to solving it, or else turn down some of the plainest messages from the servant of the Lord that we have ever received. We realize that the question is more or less hazy to all, and possibly some see no light in giving it special consideration at this

time; but we are of the opinion that God is calling this denomination to a reorganization of its medical work as truly as He called a few years ago for a reorganization of the educational work. Hence, we are moving forward in the best light we can obtain.

We are anxious for your counsel and co-operation. We do not wish to be in the position of running ahead of others in this matter, and shall be glad for your counsel and advice. We only write thus fully that our plans and position and work may be clearly understood. We are perfectly willing to content ourselves for the present with working out the plan and developing persons of ability to carry on work as medical evangelists.

If it is thought wise to lay aside the thought of legal recognition of the students when they have completed their course, we are willing to wait; but we feel most deeply that, in the light of the opportunities in California, the question of establishing a school whose whole influence and teaching shall be to qualify physicians to practice the distinctive healing art of the third angel's message, shall be given careful consideration by those who are interested in this subject and able to judge of the merits of the question.

I am sure that as soon as the question comes up, the first thought will be of a superficial medical education that would be a disgrace to the work of the message, unless we can establish...a fully-equipped medical school after the world's idea, which could become a member of the Association of American Medical Colleges. I do not believe we should for a moment give countenance to anything of this

sort. If much that is now embodied in the medical schools of the world is as useless as the maxims of the scribes and Pharisees, and if there are intricate studies that are a positive injury to the mind of the student, disqualifying him for the work he should do; and again, if much of their course is mere rubbish [see *Counsels on Health*, 369-370], would a medical school eliminating these useless things from its work and adding that most helpful, healing agency—the influence of the gospel of Christ as revealed in the study of the Scriptures, combined with rational remedies and the ten fundamental branches taught in harmony therewith—would such a school become superficial simply because it stood alone and was not rec-

ognized by the modern schools of the world?

However, as I said before, I believe the essential thing is the qualification of the worker to do the work, and that is what we are seeking to carry forward. If it is God's will that some of these workers, when qualified, shall stand forth in the freedom of the law of the state to practice the healing art of the third angel's message, God will certainly open the way...

I will enclose extracts from the California law, showing what is open in the way of State recognition for us here, that you may study the matter, and be able to counsel us later as to the advisability of our planning to take advantage of the law, that the school may be recognized.'

Some months later, however, Elder Burden apparently sought further information on the matter of legal recognition. He received the following response from a Dr. J. Park Dougall who is believed to have been speaking as a representative of the California State board of medical examiners.

IN reference to your inquiries, [I] would say that according to the present law a recognized medical college must conform to the requirements of the [AMA-affiliated] Association of American Medical Colleges, that stipulation being a part of the law.... The college to become a member of the aforesaid association must have been in existence long enough to graduate

its first four-year class. This covers the point of buildings, laboratories, and equipment. The point of faculty must not be forgotten, as investigations are held frequently both interstate and intrastate. Unless your college would conform to the requirements; your diplomas would not be recognized under the present state law.²

Whether due to misunderstanding or misrepresentation, Dr. Dougall's portrayal of the law was not completely accurate. The specific statute of California law which was in question here had been enacted relatively recently—March 14, 1907, about a year and a half before. Perhaps Dr. Dougall had not yet familiarized himself with all of its provisions. It is also true that there were, at that time and for decades after, some rather hard feelings between the AMA-recognized "M.D.s" and the practitioners of other forms of medical work. If Dougall was a representative of the California State board of

medical examiners, he would certainly have been familiar with the statute's provisions, and would also have been at the very heart of the conflict between the various branches of medical practice. As stated in the extract from the statute given below, the board of medical examiners included representatives from four different medical societies in a kind of power-sharing arrangement, and provided considerably more latitude than Dr. Dougall implied.

THE people of the State of California, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The governor shall appoint a board of medical examiners to be known as the board of medical examiners of the State of California, consisting of eleven members. Such appointments shall be made from separate lists presented to him every second year: five members from a list of ten names presented by the Medical Society of the State of California, two members from a list of four names presented by the California State Homeopathic Medical Society, two members from a list of four names presented by the Eclectic Medical Society of the State of California, and two members from a list of four names presented by the Osteopathic Association of the State of California.... It shall require the affirmative vote of seven members of said board to carry any motion or resolution to adopt any rule to pass any measure or to authorize the issuance of any certificate as in this act provided....

SECTION 6. Three forms of certificate shall be issued by said board under the seal thereof and signed by the president and the secretary: first, a certificate authorizing the holder thereof to practice medicine and surgery; second, a certificate authorizing the holder thereof to practice

osteopathy; third, a certificate authorizing the holder thereof to practice any other system or mode of treating the sick or afflicted not referred to in this section.

In order to procure a certificate to practice medicine and surgery, the applicant for such certificate must file with said board at least two weeks prior to a regular meeting thereof, satisfactory testimonials of good moral character, and a diploma issued by some legally chartered medical school, the requirements of which shall have been at the time of granting such diploma in no particular less than those prescribed by the Association of American Medical Colleges for that year, or satisfactory evidence of having possessed such diploma, and he must also file with said diploma an application sworn to before some person authorized to administer oaths, and attested by the hand and seal of such officer, if he have a seal, stating that he is the person named in said diploma, that he is the lawful holder thereof, and that the same was procured in the regular course of instruction and examination, without fraud or misrepresentation. The said application shall be made upon a blank furnished by said board, and it shall contain such information concerning the medical instruction and the preliminary education of the applicant as said board may by rule provide. Applicants who have failed to meet the

above requirements must be rejected. Applicants for a certificate to practice osteopathy shall be subject to the above regulations, except that in place of the diploma hereinbefore referred to, they shall be required to file a diploma from a legally chartered college of osteopathy, having a course of instruction of at least twenty months, requiring actual attendance, and after 1908, of three years of nine months each, and including the studies examined upon under this act. Applicants for a certificate to practice any other system or mode of treatment not in this act referred to, shall be subject to the above regulations, except that in place of the diplomas hereinbefore referred to, they shall be required to file a diploma from a legally chartered college of the system or mode of treatment which the applicant claims or intends to follow.

In addition to the requirements above set forth, all applicants for a certificate must be personally examined by said board as to their qualifications. The examination shall be conducted in the English language, shall be practical in character and designed to discover the applicant's fitness to practice his profession, and shall be in whole or in part, in writing on the following fundamental subjects, to wit: Anatomy, histology, gynecology, pathology, bacteriology, chemistry and toxicology, physiology, obstetrics, general diagnosis, hygiene. Examinations in each subject shall consist of not less than ten questions, answers to which shall be marked upon a scale of zero to ten. But all applicants must obtain not less than a general average of seventy-five percent and not less than sixty percent in any one subject.'

Elder Burden sent Elder W. C. White a carbon copy of his letter to Dr. Ruble. A few days later, Elder White mailed a letter of his own to Ruble, explaining his thoughts in regard to the College of Medical Evangelists.

YESTERDAY I received from Elder Burden [a] copy of his letter to you, dated April 14, accompanied by a copy of the recent state law of California which opens the way for the organization of such a school as Brother Burden thinks we ought to have. I had this copied and will send you several copies which you may place in the hands of our brethren who may have occasion to study this matter.

During my recent visit to Southern California I found that there were four plans in the minds of various brethren which I would describe as follows:

1. That the Loma Linda School modify its present plans, giving up most of its special work and operate simply as an ordinary sanitarium nurses' training school.

I think this proposition would be favored only by a very few. I do not know who they are. I supposed we had left that proposition way behind, but I am told there are a few, probably those connected with rival institutions, who still hold to it.

2. That the Loma Linda School be developed along the lines of the recommendation in the resolutions adopted at the October convention held at Loma Linda. These recom-

mentations, I am told, were fully endorsed at the Pacific Union Conference. [See *Loma Linda Messages*, 304]

3. That the Loma Linda School carry out the resolutions, adopted at the October convention, and in addition to this that a legal corporation be formed under the California act which would permit graduates of the school to practice their special lines [of medical work] in the State of California.

4. To work toward the end of some day establishing a regular medical college.

In times past when I have heard Mother endeavoring to outline to our brethren things that have been presented to her regarding what might be done at Loma Linda if we advance in the opening providences of God, I have supposed that we would probably work for a few years on plan number 2 and then develop plan number 4.

Elder Burden and some of his associates think that plan number 3 would be a more correct working out of the pattern shown to Mother, and they think that we need not wait several years, but that it could be done without much delay.

This is the matter which Elder Burden would have submitted to your council had he acted upon the resolution of the Southern California Conference Committee opening the way for him to go East to attend this council; but after Elder Cottrell had gone East, the physicians at Loma Linda invited me to join them in council, and we spent

considerable time discussing the advantages of plan number 2, which has been endorsed by the medical convention and by the union conference, and it was finally agreed that it would be better to work upon this plan for the coming year. During the year those who are in favor of plan number 3 could present the matter in a clear way to the medical department and during the next General Conference the question could be raised and the opinion of the medical department secured as to whether it was advisable to take the advance step, and when. This is my understanding of the present status of the question. In the Word, it is said that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. Undoubtedly Elder Cottrell has given you his testimony, and in Elder Burden's letter of April 14 you have his testimony, and now I have briefly given you mine. I think they are all in agreement, but perhaps each of us has emphasized some feature more than the other, and thus you have the composite picture.⁴

1. *Loma Linda Messages*, 368-370

2. Warren L. Johns and Richard H. Utt, editors, *The Vision Bold: An Illustrated History of the Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Health*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, (1977), 184

3. *Statutes of California*, Thirty-seventh session, "An act for the regulation of the practice of medicine and surgery, osteopathy, and other systems or modes of treating the sick or afflicted, in the State of California, and for the appointment of a board of medical examiners in the matter of said regulation," 232-234

4. *Loma Linda Messages*, 373-374

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

Warren Eugene Howell on Adventist Education

W. E. Howell (1869-1943) served the church as educator, missionary, secretary of the General Conference Department of Education, and secretary to the president of the General Conference.

THE spirit of simplicity and distinction from the world [was] inculcated from the very beginning of the Advent movement till now. These practices [reducing separation from the world] seem much at variance with the sacrifices and deprivations of our hardworking missionaries, with their meager means and facilities, on the other side of the globe, whither these same graduates may sooner or later be called.

Yet, on the other hand, these various things, though serving as straws to show the direction of the wind, can hardly be called the most important factors...under the topic of separation from the world. In our educational convention of 1910, a warning was sounded, which was not altogether untimely, against the menace of a disease then called "universititis." What was then a possible two or three isolated cases has since become epidemic. The very psychology of building up our standards to match those of the educational world, seemed to breed the idea that if we were going to

measure up to the standards of the world in our teaching, we must resort to the world for our training and our standing to teach up to those standards....

While the logic of this reasoning must be admitted, its fallacy lies in the false premise that we ever meant to adopt the world's standards or its methods of reaching them. Our aim was to produce educational values equivalent to, and in our own estimation much superior to, anything the world gives. We should not dare make such an assumption of superiority were we not depending on the principles and methods of education that God has graciously given us. To the extent that we live up to these shall we have that prosperity and good success in true education vouchsafed to all God's children....

While our teachers were resorting to centers of learning in increasing numbers, followed to no small degree by student graduates and undergraduates, a new menace arose from an unexpected quarter. Wisely or unwisely, our medical college had

linked up with an organization which assumed the task of defining and dictating standards for medical schools, with a view to eliminating incompetent institutions. While the step we took looked innocent enough at first, the inevitable result of tying up an institution of our own with an organization of entirely different aims, soon showed itself in a surprising way. A new standard was promulgated, requiring that all entrants to a standard medical college should present their credits from a school that was registered as standard by an association of educators who had assumed a similar task of standardizing literary schools.

From that day to this, the idea has been kept before our educators of registering our colleges in a secular standardizing association, thus tying

them by much more than a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God and who will not hearken to His commandments. Only two colleges have taken such a step, on the most moderate scale that could be discovered—that of registering only the junior college department. Where this step will lead these schools and any others that may take it, only He who reads the future as well as the past, can predict. It would almost seem like tying ourselves to the tail of a kite, to be carried whither the holder of the string may list—seemingly in the direction of less efficiency to serve the cause of God.

"Separation From the World," *Review and Herald*, July 12, 1923

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

Through Opened Doors

THE right hand is used to open doors through which the body may find entrance."¹

Anyone familiar with Ellen White's writings will know immediately that the illustration above is meant to convey the importance of the medical missionary work. Time and again she refers to this branch of labor as the "right arm of the message." Her intent is clear; medical missionary work is of such a magnitude in the overall mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that we dare not neglect it. It is crucially important that this work be given the place God intended it to fill, and that it be carried forward as He has stipulated. It is all too true that that which has the potential of bringing great blessings can, if used ill-advisedly, bring just as great problems.

The history of Adventist medical work bears out the importance assigned to it by Ellen White. Though the Western Health Reform Institute was a rather modest beginning, by the 1880s it had—under its new name of the Battle Creek Sanitarium—grown to significant influence in both the church and the world. Humanly speaking, its growth was largely due to the activity of one John Harvey Kellogg, M.D. Fortunately, though, we have more than human insight: "The Health Institution has not been brought into favor simply because of the talent, skill, or wisdom of one man. It is because God has had faithful instrumentalities that have consented to be worked by the Holy Spirit, and many influences have been combined in bringing about the prosperity of the Sanitarium. The time that has been spent in communing with God, in seeking His help before undertaking to relieve those who were in a critical condition, has brought angels to the side of the doctor and his assistants. In transacting your business that has been so important, you have succeeded according as you have trusted in God."

It is this simple truth that John Kellogg needed always to bear in mind. We, too, must learn this lesson of submission to the directions of God in every point. With his disciplined mind and determined pursuit of knowledge, Kellogg climbed rapidly to prominence. In 1888 Ellen White could say, "In the providence of God, Dr. Kellogg has influence. Like yourself [George Butler] he was taken from among the laboring class, and by his indomitable will and persevering energy and with one object in view, he has reached a position among the honored men of the world. This position did not compel him to sacrifice one principle of our doctrines of faith to make a success. He has signalized himself

as a man of wisdom and aptitude to plan and execute them, and his high standing in the medical profession has an influence to remove from a large class the false impressions which have prevailed with regard to Seventh-day Adventists being an ignorant class of people."

Internal Resistance

We may be grateful for the excellent beginning made by Dr. Kellogg. Unfortunately, the devil is a relentless foe, scheming from every angle for the destruction of souls. Temptations from without had not caused his downfall; a new form of vexation—this time from within the church—was to have greater success in weakening his position. In June of 1898, Ellen White would write, "In order to be carried forward aright the medical missionary work needs talent and wise discrimination. But can this work be done while those in responsible places—presidents of conferences, and ministers—bar the way? I say to the president of the Michigan Conference, to Elder _____, and to others, Remove the stumbling block that you are surely placing before the people...."

"Those who are doing medical missionary work in Battle Creek should have the full sanction and co-operation of the church...."

"Time is short, and there is a great work to be done. If you feel no interest in the work that is going forward, if you will not encourage medical missionaries to work in the churches, they will do it without your consent, for this work must and will be done. Brother _____, Brother _____, Brother _____, Brother _____, in the name of the Lord, I call upon you to take your position on the Lord's side. Do not be found fighting against God."⁴

"The Lord has given Dr. Kellogg his work. It is a fact that our ministers are very slow to become health reformers, notwithstanding all the light which the Lord has given upon this subject. This has caused Dr. Kellogg to lose confidence in them. Their tardy work in health reform has created in him a spirit of criticism, and he has borne down on them in an unsparing manner, which the Lord does not sanction. He has belittled the gospel ministry, and in his regard and ideas has placed the medical missionary work above the ministry. I have seen that in the censuring of ministers remarks have been made which have not been to the honor and glory of God."⁵

Add to this the growing fascination of the doctor with the tenets of pantheism and his insatiable appetite for control of all with which he was connected, and you have a perfect recipe for the explosion of Battle Creek in the early years of this century. Was Adventist medical missionary work at an end?

The Rebirth of Adventist Medical Missionary Work

No, the Lord had plans for a little piece of property in Southern California. Loma Linda—the Hill Beautiful—it was called. In 1902 Ellen White wrote: "I have been shown that in southern California there are properties for sale on which buildings are already erected that could be utilized for our work, and other properties in localities especially suited to sanitarium work, and that

such properties will be offered to us at much less than their original cost. In these places, away from the din and confusion of the congested cities, we can establish sanitariums in which the sick can be cared for in the way in which God designs them to be cared for."⁶

By 1904, her words were proved. Property and buildings representing an investment of \$25,000 were purchased for \$4,000 and converted into the Paradise Valley Sanitarium. The Glendale Hotel represented an investment of \$50,000; the denomination paid \$12,000, and the Glendale Sanitarium was born. But still Mrs. White urged her brethren to continue the search, for she had been instructed that there was yet a third property to be found.

Enthusiasm for the project was, understandably, diminished by a lack of funds on hand at the time. Even those who favored such work and who trusted Ellen White's counsel were, quite frankly, looking for an inexpensive solution. W. C. White later recounted, 'And then came the word that a third sanitarium was to be established in Southern California. At the time Dr. Leadsworth had some treatment rooms in Riverside. He was willing to sell these treatment rooms, and enter the organized work. So I said to Elder Burden, 'Buy them quick; perhaps they will meet the requirement.' He bought them, but this more did not count. It did not fill the bill."⁷

Throughout the search for the two previous properties, a large tract of land complete with spacious hotel and workers' cottages had drawn occasional attention. Unfortunately, the asking price was \$110,000. Considering that over \$150,000 had gone into the development of the property, it was a good deal. Still, no one familiar with the financial condition of the California Conference could consider a price like that. Some months later when they checked again, the figure had dropped to \$85,000—better, but still out of reach.

In the spring of 1905, Elder John Burden contacted the owners once again, asking for the bottom dollar price. The owners, now seriously indebted, were anxious to sell. The price was \$40,000, firm. Burden knew that even that sum would be a strain on the available finances. Still, he felt that the opportunity warranted a more detailed examination of the estate. He found a main building with sixty-four rooms, four four-room cottages, and a large recreation hall—all in excellent condition, furnished, steam heated, wired with electric lights, and plumbed with water from an artesian well. The seventy-six acres included an orchard and pasture land. The grounds were laid out attractively with lawns, drives, and a full mile of cement sidewalk. Also included were livestock and all necessary farm implements. In short, everything was set up for business. All John Burden lacked was the money.

Elder Burden immediately wrote Ellen White. She happened to be attending the General Conference of 1905 in Washington, D.C., at the time, although her home was in northern California. W. C. White later spoke of his surprise at his mother's response: 'At the General Conference, Mother sent for me one afternoon, and said, 'Willie, will you do what I tell you?' I said, 'I usually do, Mother.' Then she told me that she wanted me to telegraph to Elder Burden to secure Loma Linda, and to do this without taking counsel with anyone. I

suggested that this was a very strange thing to do, that it was not the way that we had worked in the past, and I asked, 'Why should I not take counsel with the Brethren?' Mother replied, 'Will you do what I tell you?' I said, 'That is what I promised to do.' Then she said, 'Go and send the telegram without delay.' And the message was sent according to the instruction. I did not know the reasons at that time, but I think I have learned them since."⁸

The message was, "Secure the property by all means, so that it can be held, and then obtain all the money you can and make sufficient payments to hold the place. This is the very property we ought to have."

That Burden was pleased to receive such a reply seems likely. That he was perplexed when his local conference officers wired him saying not to buy, is a certainty. They assured him they would "take no responsibility in the matter."

Nevertheless the property was obtained. Following Ellen White's counsel—while trying not to offend his immediate superiors, whose advice he ignored—Elder Burden took out a personal loan of \$1,000 to hold the property. This amount was to be nonrefundable, and would be forfeited should there be a failure to meet any of the successive payments.

Inspired by his example, local Adventists raised \$4,000 to complete the down payment. Another payment of \$5,000 was due in one month, but no one knew where the money would come from.

A month later, they still didn't know. The officers of the Southern California Conference met in emergency session with Elder Burden. There was not a dollar available to meet the need, and if the payment was not made that day it meant the loss of the money already paid. Naturally there was a tendency for those who had advised against this venture to feel impatient with Burden. But impatience didn't solve the problem.

For want of better ideas, it was suggested that they wait for the day's mail. Among the letters was one from Atlantic City, New Jersey. It was from a woman unknown to all in the meeting and contained a check for \$5,000. As might be imagined, the brethren concluded that the Lord was in favor of the project.

The next month it was the same story. The payment was due; the funds weren't there. But somehow they always managed to meet the deadline, and Loma Linda Sanitarium came to be. Soon, however, this bright beginning gave way to some very troublesome clouds of uncertainty as the development of the new facility was contemplated. What, exactly, was the church trying to do with this place? What should they be doing?

In time it became evident that Ellen White contemplated something more than sanitarium work for Loma Linda. Not only a place of treatment and healing, the new institution was to become an educational center as well. Perhaps her most decisive statement in this regard came in an October 30, 1907, interview with John Burden. When asked, "Is this school that you have spoken of simply to qualify nurses, or is it to embrace also the qualifications for physicians?" she answered, "Physicians are to receive their education here.

Here they are to receive such a mold that when they go out to labor, they will not seek to grasp the very highest wages, or else do nothing."¹⁰

(It should be noted that when Ellen White spoke of trained physicians, she meant something more than someone familiar with herbs and hydrotherapy, useful as those treatments may be. In *Battle Creek Letters*, page 40, she calls for "the minister of the gospel who expects to go to foreign fields" to have "a knowledge of surgery, that in cases of necessity he will know how to handle medical instruments." There can be no doubt that a medical missionary physician should know at least as much.)

Changes in Medical Education

During the years in which Adventist medical education was being re-established and re-defined, medical education in general was in sweeping transition. A few decades earlier almost anyone could pick up a doctor of medicine degree in as little as six months by attending one of the smaller medical institutions scattered across the country. But since that time strong steps had been taken to standardize and improve the training of physicians, and for good reason—would you want to trust your life to the hands of someone with only six months of medical training?

Adventist medical training, however, had been carried on with only a minimum of interaction with governing bodies, and virtually no interference. How were they to relate to the new situation?

By this time the American Medical Association had become a power of some magnitude, and was urging forward the upgrading of medical education. But the question now faced the leading brethren, "Is the 'upgrading' of the A.M.A. heading straight up, or is it heading slightly off the mark?"

As early as 1907 A. G. Daniells, president of the General Conference, stated his belief that Loma Linda must have the recognition of the A.M.A. if the school was "to be worth a nickel."¹¹ He had touched on a key issue, one which would largely decide the course to be followed by the College of Medical Evangelists (C.M.E.). So, too, would it answer the as yet unasked question of which way Adventist education as a whole would go. It was a long process, but the right arm was opening a door; the body would soon follow.

The matter of the school's relationship to government regulations and the A.M.A. became very pressing. Letter after letter on this subject passed between Ellen White and John Burden, the "father" of Loma Linda. Others, too, were interested. It was one of the "hot topics" of 1908 and 1909.

Counsel on the Work of Loma Linda

On March 24, 1908, Sister White wrote to Elder Burden, "The education that meets the world's standard is to be less and less valued by those who are seeking for efficiency in carrying the medical missionary work in connection with the work of the third angel's message. They are to be educated from the standpoint of conscience; and as they conscientiously and faithfully follow right methods in their treatment of the sick, these methods will come to be

recognized as preferable to the methods of nursing to which many have been accustomed, which demands the use of poisonous drugs."¹²

In the fall of 1909 Elders J. A. Burden and W. C. White sought counsel concerning the college's legal status. Would it be wrong to secure a charter from the state? The answer was clear: "No, I do not see that it would, if a charter was secured on right terms. Only be sure that you do not exalt men above God. If you can gain force and influence that will make your work more effective without tying yourself to worldly men, that would be right. But we are not to exalt the human above the divine.... I do not see anything wrong in that, as long as you do not in any way lift men above the Lord God of Israel, or throw discredit upon His power. But enter into no agreement with any fraternity that would *open a door of temptation to some weak souls to lose their hold on God.*"¹³

Near the close of the interview, W. C. White suggested that the college could meet the legal requirements without compromise. Where the law required certain courses of study he suggested, "We do not have to teach these subjects in their way; we can teach them in our way. When it comes to the study of drugs, they teach how to give them. We teach the dangers of using them, and how to get along without them."

His mother responded, "Well, you must plan these details yourselves. I have told you what I have received, but these details you will have to work out for yourselves."

In summary, Burden stated: "It seems clear to me that any standing we can lawfully have without compromising, is not out of harmony with God's plan." And Ellen White agreed. "No, it is not. All I can say is that I have had very distinct light, however, that there is danger of our limiting the power of the Holy One of Israel. He is the God of the universe. Our influence is dependent upon our carrying out the Word of the living God."¹⁴

In October of 1909 she wrote, "Our people are now being tested as to whether they will obtain their wisdom from the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, or seek to the god of Ekron. Let us determine that we shall not be tied by so much as a thread to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God, and who will not hearken to His commandments....

"Shall we represent before the world that our physicians must follow the pattern of the world before they can be qualified to act as successful physicians? This is the question that is now testing the faith of some of our brethren."¹⁵

Relating to the Law

Even in the light of this counsel there remained perplexing questions in regard to the school's relationship to the laws governing the practice of medicine. In 1903, at the height of the controversy over Kellogg's *The Living Temple*, Ellen White had raised the issue:

'All our denominational colleges and training-schools should make provision to give their students the education essential for evangelists and for Christian business men. The youth and those more advanced in years who feel it their duty to fit themselves for work requiring the passing of certain legal tests should

be able to secure at our Union Conference training-schools all that is essential, without having to go to Battle Creek for their preparatory education....

"If there are legal requirements making it necessary that medical students shall take certain preparatory courses of study, let our colleges teach the required additional studies in a manner consistent with Christian education.... They should arrange to carry their students to the point of literary and scientific training that is necessary. Many of these requirements have been made because so much of the preparatory work done in ordinary schools is superficial. Let all our work be thorough, faithful, and true.

"In our training-schools, the Bible is to be made the basis of all education. And in the required studies, it is not necessary for our teachers to bring in the objectionable books that the Lord has instructed us not to use in our schools. From light that the Lord has given me, I know that our training-schools in various parts of the field should be placed in the most favorable position possible for qualifying our youth to meet the tests specified by state laws regarding medical students. To this end the very best teaching talent should be secured that our schools may be brought up to the required standard....

"Let me repeat: It is not necessary for so many of our youth to study medicine. But for those who should take medical studies our Union Conference training-schools should make ample provision in facilities for preparatory education."¹⁶

Now, facing the issue in more detail, she offered additional counsel. On November 5, she wrote to Elder Burden, "Some questions have been asked me regarding our relation to the laws governing medical practitioners. We need to move understandingly, for the enemy would be pleased to hedge up our work so that our physicians would have only a limited influence. Some men do not act in the fear of God, and they may seek to bring us into trouble by placing on our necks yokes that we could not consent to bear. We cannot submit to regulations if the sacrifice of principle is involved; for this would imperil the soul's salvation.

"But whenever we can comply with the law of the land without putting ourselves in a false position, we should do so. Wise laws have been framed in order to safeguard the people against the imposition of unqualified physicians. These laws we should respect, for we are ourselves by them protected from presumptuous pretenders. Should we manifest opposition to these requirements, it would tend to restrict the influence of our medical missionaries.

"We must carefully consider what is involved in these matters. If there are conditions to which we could not subscribe, we should endeavor to have these matters adjusted, so that there would not be strong opposition to our physicians. The Saviour bids us be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

"The Lord is our leader and teacher. He charges us not to connect with those who do not acknowledge God."¹⁷

Ellen White had already said that the school was to train qualified physicians, but she had also said that some "adjusting" might be needed with the civil authorities. One specific issue, of course, was the question of meeting the

requirements of the A.M.A. Would compliance with their standards constitute a connection "with those who do not acknowledge God"? Would compliance "tie" the school "to the educational policies of those who do not discern the voice of God, and who will not hearken to His commandments"?

In yet another attempt to resolve the matter, a letter was placed in the hands of Ellen White on January 26, 1910, asking for a clarification. But rather than asking directly if C.M.E. should seek A.M.A. approval, the letter asked if the school should be such that the graduates would be "able to take state board examinations and become registered, qualified physicians."

The next day, January 27, 1910, she answered in writing. Here we will quote only the key portion: "And for the special preparation of those of our youth who have clear convictions of their duty to obtain a medical education that will enable them to pass the examinations required by law of all who practice as regularly qualified physicians, we are to supply whatever may be required, so that these youth need not be compelled to go to medical schools conducted by men not of our faith. *Thus we shall close a door that the enemy would be pleased to have left open.*"¹⁸

Here then was the answer—but what did it mean? Some understood it to authorize an A.M.A.-approved medical school following the regular curriculum. A few, familiar perhaps with Sister White's previous statements, saw it as a call for a "special" training school that would prepare students to pass the examinations required by "wise laws," "adjusted" so as to require nothing to which they "could not subscribe." There were still some "details" that the men involved would have to "work out" themselves.

It appears that the majority of the brethren had, by this time, lost sight of the possibility of "adjusting matters," and believed that it was either fall in line with the A.M.A. or close the school. (Elder Burden would seem to be one of the few who did not see the issues in this way.)¹⁹ It isn't hard to see why they would think that. For a small denomination to tangle with the power of the A.M.A.—and the state and federal laws behind it—was about as bad a mismatch as David fighting Goliath. That other options did exist is evident from the history of the advocates of chiropractic and osteopathy. Shunning A.M.A. affiliation, they simply continued practicing their own versions of the healing art.

Still More Counsel

Despite the fact that she had already given the brethren this specific answer to their specific question, Ellen White continued to write words of counsel and instruction. In April of 1910 she wrote again to Elder Burden. "I wish to express to you some thoughts that should be kept before the sanitarium workers. That which will make them a power for good is the knowledge that the great Medical Missionary has chosen them to this work, that He is their chief instructor, and that it is ever their duty to recognize Him as their teacher

"The Lord has shown us the evil of depending upon the strength of earthly organizations. He has instructed us that the commission of the medical mis-

sionary is received from the very highest Authority; He would have us understand that it is a mistake to regard as most essential the education given by physicians who reject the authority of Christ....

"Some of our medical missionaries have supposed that a medical training according to the plans of worldly schools is essential to their success. To those who have thought that the only way to success is by being taught by worldly men, I would now say, Put away such ideas. This is a mistake that should be corrected....

"It is a lack of faith in the power of God that leads our physicians to lean so much upon the arm of the law, and to trust so much to the influence of worldly powers."²⁰

A Long, Hard Struggle

The College of Medical Evangelists faced an uphill battle for its existence. There were many within the denomination who could see no hope of successfully establishing a full-fledged medical school. Naturally, they did little to encourage those who were seeking to further the project.

Just as great a challenge was the openly hostile attitude of the officers of the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the A.M.A.'s Council on Medical Education. Convinced that a small religious sect could not possibly raise the necessary finances to meet their requirements, they frankly told the administrators at Loma Linda that they should abandon the enterprise and save what little money they had for other causes.

They were not far wrong—money was constantly in short supply. Construction of new facilities and the purchase of equipment for the college quickly absorbed what little was available, and the various administrative units of the church—from the General Conference on down—were reluctant to accept major financial responsibility for a project many felt was doomed to fail. When financial assistance did come from the General Conference in 1912 it helped pay bills, but also raised tensions and concerns since the \$10,000 annual allotment was taken from tithe funds. This was done "under strong protest from some." Even the president of the college "was not in favor of using tithe for the medical school."²¹

The first stipulation of the medical authorities was the construction of laboratory facilities and the purchase of equipment. This requirement was largely met by early 1912.²² The next step, that of providing actual clinical practice for the students, was not dealt with so easily. Early efforts to supply this need in the sanitarium were unsuccessful in the judgment of the A.M.A. Similarly, efforts to meet this need through affiliation programs with other hospitals proved difficult and insufficient.

It is interesting to note the reasons given by Dr. W A. Ruble, then president of C.M.E., for his dissatisfaction with the affiliation program. Speaking of the student work which the college had carried on in the San Bernardino hospital he said: "The patients are entirely under the management of the Medical Superintendent, who has full control of the treatment administered. This

differs greatly from the treatment which we wish to demonstrate before our students. There is no way of teaching physiological therapeutics without having a goodly number of patients upon whom to demonstrate.

"The last two years of our medical course are the most important years because they are the years when the principles of healthful living and physiological therapeutics are emphasized and taught in detail.... The last two years are given entirely to the application of therapeutic measures and are the most important in teaching the principles for which the health work of the denomination stands. If we had access to all the county hospitals in California this would not at all suffice for giving the education which must be imparted to our students."²³

The Loma Linda Hospital

Accordingly, on March 29, 1912, the C.M.E. constituency voted to solicit \$15,000 to begin constructing a clinical hospital on the college grounds in Loma Linda. By May 27, plans called for a single-story building, 46 feet by 72 feet, with two wings to be used as patient wards. Construction began in late fall, then stopped in early December when the \$2,000 raised for the project ran out.²⁴ More fund raising was required.

A year later the hospital was a near-reality, and cause for rejoicing. On March 25, 1914, Dr. Ruble again pointed out its importance to their plans: "The addition of the new hospital, which was opened in December, has been a most important acquisition to our college. From a temporal standpoint the matter of therapeutics is the most important reason for conducting a medical course. This new hospital makes it possible for our students to have under their own supervision different diseases which they may treat according to the system of physiologic therapeutics which has been accepted by this denomination."²⁵

How much of this was actually accomplished is in doubt. In his presentation Ruble explained that the hospital "has not been fully completed. There are no treatment rooms, dining room, or kitchen."

Further discussion that day led to the conclusion that the hospital was, after all, unacceptable. "We find quite a difference of opinion as to how the building should be utilised, all agreeing that it cannot be used for the clinical work of the college as was first thought necessary for the work of the school...."

"Owing to the great diversity of opinion concerning the best use to which the building should be put, we do not feel competent to advise, except that as it cannot be used as originally designed for the college clinical hospital, endeavor should now be made to turn it so far as possible to the financial profit of the sanitarium."²⁶

What had happened? How could they reverse their thinking so suddenly? Strangely, the records are largely silent as to the drama of that day. All accounts, from the available minutes of the constituency meeting to more recent histories of the era pass very lightly over the reason behind their decision. Indeed, several books on the subject barely even mention the project in the

first place, let alone explain its failure. Though full details are lacking, it is clear that the major factor was the A.M.A.'s decision that the Redlands/San Bernardino area did not provide sufficient population to fill the hospital with a wide enough variety of medical conditions.

It was a sad and challenging day for the constituency. The minutes of the meeting include a section with the depressing title, "General Discussion of C.M.E. Problems." Among the concerns: lack of finances, the allotment of General Conference tithe funds for the school, the influence on Adventist medical students should they be forced to finish their training at non-Adventist schools, and a general concern that the school might be struggling for a goal other than the Lord's approval.

Characteristic of this last item were the comments of Elder Burden and Elder R. S. Owen (specified as the Loma Linda Bible instructor by Ellen White when the special work in Southern California was to be "perfected," and demanded "the best Bible teacher we can supply."²⁷) The minutes record:

"J. A. Burden emphasized the need of following out the plans laid down by the Lord, that it is merit and not recognition that counts. We have a work to do and need not ask the world for its sanction. He stated that our sanitariums should be the best hospitals in which our students could gain experience in association with God-fearing physicians; that we have been viewing things in a wrong light; that our students should be trained as soul winners....

"R. S. Owen reminded us that God's recognition should be first sought. That while we should train those to do the work of a physician, a larger number should be trained as Medical Evangelists."²⁸

The Ellen G. White Memorial Hospital

Idealism aside, if C.M.E. was to secure A.M.A. approval they must find a way to provide greater clinical experience for their students. The records indicate that the faculty sought out every possible means of filling this need. Working relations were established with the San Bernardino and Los Angeles county hospitals and the Glendale Sanitarium, an out-patient clinic was started in Los Angeles, and students gained additional experience doing "visiting nurses' work." In the final analysis, however, it just wasn't enough to meet the requirements. Something more was needed, and the A.M.A. strongly suggested that it be a 200 bed hospital in downtown Los Angeles.

This suggestion, coming into serious consideration on the heels of the Loma Linda Hospital's rejection, raised a problem. In 1901, thirteen years before, it had been proposed that a facility be built on Los Angeles' Hill Street to house a combination vegetarian restaurant and sanitarium. On September 15, 1902, a council meeting was held to discuss the plan. Ellen White was present and, while recognizing that others might see the issue from a different perspective, she nonetheless made her opinion of the proposition very clear:

"With the light that I have had in regard to sanitariums where the sick are to be treated I cannot give one word of counsel about huddling in the city. I cannot do it myself, and yet it may look very different to others; but

with the light that I have, I could not advise placing a building in the city. You are out of the city, I know; you are out at one side. That changes the proposition somewhat; but further than that, I could not say; I could not give you any advice. You will have to arrange that among yourselves, because I could not give advice to build a sanitarium in any city. I could not do it, because it has been so distinctly laid before me that when a sanitarium is built, it must be located where it can accomplish the end in view—the object for which it is established."²⁹

Five days later the question was still on her mind. In a letter addressed to "Dear Brethren," she elaborated further:

"The complete plan in regard to the purchase of the Hill Street property was not laid before me till my last visit to Los Angeles. I was then taken to see this property, and as I walked up the hill in front of it, I heard distinctly a voice that I well know. Had this voice said, 'This is the right place for God's people to purchase,' I should have been greatly astonished. But it said, 'Encourage no settlement here of any description. God forbids. My people must get away from such surroundings. This place is as Sodom for wickedness. The place where My institutions are established must be altogether different. Leave the cities, and like Enoch come from your retirement to warn the people of the cities.'

"I am astonished that our brethren should have thought of purchasing the property on Hill Street.... After I had seen its situation, I knew that I could not for a moment give my consent to the establishment there of an institution of any kind.

"For us to establish a sanitarium there would be like Lot going into Sodom. It would be worse, because as far as the outward surroundings of Sodom were concerned, it was like the garden of Eden. But on the Hill Street property there is no spare land, and no opportunity to see the beauties of nature."³⁹

This previous counsel naturally raised questions as to the wisdom of erecting a large hospital in Los Angeles. While there is no doubt that at least some of the men involved with the decision-making process remembered this earlier counsel, it is probable that they did not have the documents quoted above readily available for their study. The seventh volume of the *Testimonies*, however, contains several chapters dealing in a more general way with the location of sanitariums, and this material was considered and discussed.

In his classic volume, *The Story of Our Health Message*, D. E. Robinson comments that "It was felt by some of the brethren that the Testimony of 1901 [Robinson cites *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 85] had reference to 'a sanitarium,' and not to a clinical hospital such as the needs of the medical college now required." As in the case of the earlier Loma Linda hospital building, however, information is sparse. What, for instance, did the rest of the brethren understand Ellen White's instruction to mean? What alternative plans did they have to offer? There are very few answers available to such questions.

One of the more decisive influences in the minds of the brethren was W. C. White's account of his mother's reaction to news of a \$5,000 donation to purchase property for the project: "Mother's lips quivered, and for a moment

she shook with emotion. Then she said: 'I am glad you told me this. I have been in perplexity about Loma Linda, and this gives me courage and joy.'³¹

Out of all these considerations came the action taken by the board of C.M.E. on June 17, 1915. Since it provides a fairly comprehensive statement of the aims and goals of the brethren, we quote it here at some length:

"In view of the fact that the College of Medical Evangelists is established with the avowed purpose of giving a medical missionary training to large numbers of nurses who are to be trained with unusual ability as nurses, also for numbers to be trained with the ability of physicians but without legal qualifications, as well as to educate a smaller number as legally qualified physicians; in our opinion, it is necessary, in order to successfully accomplish this purpose, that the College be provided with hospital and dispensary facilities, where a combined evangelistic and medical training can be given along the lines of health reform and rational therapeutics, in such a locality where a larger volume of clinical material can be reached and wider experience in evangelistic lines can be supplied than is possible with the present facilities. In order to accomplish these purposes, therefore, be it

"Resolved, That in harmony with suggestions made by Elder I. H. Evans, we ask the North American Division Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to inaugurate a movement to provide property and erect a building for dispensary purposes, also a hospital building to be known as [the] 'Ellen G. White Memorial Hospital,' at a cost for grounds and buildings not to exceed \$50,000."³²

Recognition from the A.M.A.

But a mere action by a board is never enough to actually make things happen. There remained a great deal of work to be done in explaining the project, convincing church members and leaders alike of its desirability, and, of course, raising funds. Beyond the construction of the new facilities lay the larger tasks of gaining the approval of the A.M.A.

In the midst of World War I the entire school was exposed to grave risk by the United States government's policy of the wartime draft. Provision was made to exempt medical students and instructors from the draft, but only if they were associated with a college rated either 'A' or 'B' on the A.M.A.'s scale. At that time C.M.E. was rated "C." Through a seven-week marathon of cross-country rail trips from California to Washington, D. C., to Chicago, countless telegrams, and numerous interviews with officials of the government, the military, and the A.M.A., the dean of the college managed to secure the higher rating just in time to forestall the induction of nearly the whole school.

In November 1922, under less traumatic circumstances, C.M.E. was finally granted the A.M.A.'s highest rating for medical schools. It looked as though the school had at last made it through its tough times. Unforeseen just then, however, one more major hurdle remained.

Academic Accreditation

By the late 1920s the A.M.A. was at work again to "upgrade" their system, this time by requiring that premedical work be taken at an accredited college. In the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, August 1931, an article appeared which contained thinly veiled threats that Loma Linda's 'A' rating would soon be dropped because they were accepting so many students from unaccredited schools. But our Adventist colleges were not accredited. What could be done?

In October of that year, after long debate, and with a great many misgivings, the administrators of the church gave authorization for junior and senior colleges to seek accreditation. The action was stated to be an "emergency measure," and one which all felt to contain some danger. The action was accompanied by the following safeguards:

"Whereas, We know full well from observation and repeated warnings from the Spirit of Prophecy that by sending our teachers to the universities of the world for advanced degrees we are exposing them to great dangers, as is evidenced by the number of our men who have already in this way lost their hold upon God, and realizing that there is great danger to our system of Christian education through the molding influence of these worldly schools on our teachers,

"We recommend, That in the selection of teachers to attend the universities only persons of outstanding Christian experience and who have been successful in Christian work should be chosen—persons whose faith in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy is well grounded, and who realize that in attending the university they are being exposed to subtle and almost unconscious influences of infidelity—and persons who believe with all their hearts in the superiority of Christian education."³³

1935 Autumn Council Re-evaluation

Four years later, at the Autumn Council of 1935, a report was given on the progress of this endeavor. This report, reproduced in chapter forty, makes very interesting reading.

The ominous tone of the commission's findings produced a great deal of consternation in the minds of the delegates. Sentiment ran strong, but easy solutions were not forthcoming. We quote now from the discussion following the commission's presentation:

"I personally believe the vote we took at that time [1931] was in the wrong direction. I have been instructed by the Word and the writings of Sister White very definitely about this since then. The instruction is so definite....

"In the educational program we have followed since 1931 I feel very definitely and certainly that we have been more and more united with men whose counsel is misleading."—Elder Watson

"I believe that the entire future of the youth of this denomination is dependent upon maintaining in the institutions of education the educational

policies of this denomination, and right principles, and clinging to the blue-print God has given to us."—Elder Ruskjer

"I hope the Lord will lead us some day to build upon the foundation of this report to give further study in rescuing our educational system from the world."—Elder McElhany

"I believe that the educational policy that the world has fastened upon the denomination is like a great octopus. Its tentacles reach out to every school, and in this report of this commission we are merely clipping some of the tentacles of that octopus, and I hope in God that the time will come when we can take our students clear away from worldly things in our schools."—Elder Wilcox

"I feel perplexed and confused. I cannot quite harmonize the speech of yesterday by Elder Watson and the speeches today in favor of accreditation. If we do not accredit our medical schools, we fear what can happen to us, we are today told. We were told yesterday to exercise faith. I do not honestly see how I can go back and repeat your speech, Elder Watson, and when the brethren ask me, 'Are you tied by a thread?' say, 'Not a thread.' How can I harmonize that by what we are doing when we authorize accreditation for all of our academies, for all of our junior colleges, and for all?"—President Andreasen

"We have accredited two senior colleges. Now we propose to recommend that another college be accredited, and that all junior colleges proceed with caution. If this is wrong, how can it be right to recommend to accredit another? If we should not be tied by so much as a thread, why not cut loose?"—Elder Rice

"The facts involve us into considering whether or not we will continue with the educational program that has become more and more worldly, or whether we will start an educational plan that is in harmony with the instruction we have received from God."—Elder Watson

"I think Brother Watson's talk just now has risen to the height of his Tuesday morning talk, yet we are preparing to send boys [and girls] to hell in three of our schools. If this is the plan, we have no right to set up two colleges, already set up [that is, already accredited], and going to set up a third one, and do the very thing that we ought not to do. I cannot see any difference between two and six for the whole system of schools. If this accrediting is wrong, it is wrong altogether ... Let us face the thing—do one thing or the other. I cannot see it any other way, between sending boys and girls to hell from three schools or six. If it is wrong let us quit it.

"Oh, but you say that we are not ready to do that. Our commission does not recommend it. I do not know how to say this without its sounding wrong. I wish I did because I admire these men. I love them, but when men with definite convictions came before the commission and pointed out the same thing, they could not see a single place where they could alter this report. We had better take more time to study before we vote.... If this comes up for a vote I am going to say 'No' long enough for my vote to register 'No.' "—Elder Votaw

Charting a Course for the Future

And so it went. The acknowledged leaders of our denomination were weighted down with the seriousness of the situation. That the decision made that day would influence the eternal destiny of hundreds and thousands of our Adventist youth they were well aware.

Perhaps more than any other aspect of the situation, that which concerned them was the commission's account of how "a large class of very young and immature people have been finding their way into the universities believing that [to be] a highway to appointment in our institutional work." Simply put, Adventist young people were astute enough to recognize that if a degree from an unaccredited Adventist college was not sufficient for the denomination's college-level instructors of many years experience, it could hardly be sufficient for someone just seeking to enter the work force. As so often happens, actions were speaking much louder than words.

The dilemma was especially ironic when considered in light of the original need for an Adventist medical school. More than any other reason, Ellen White cited the importance of providing a setting for aspiring young Adventists where they could pursue even their advanced studies without going to schools conducted by those who did not honor God above all else. How frustrating to find, after all the effort put forth with this goal in mind, that circumstances had conspired to attack us once again in the same way. Do not suppose for a moment that the delegates took this responsibility lightly. But what could be done?

Perhaps it need not be said that the Autumn Council, after long and earnest discussion, did not see any way that they could reverse the step taken four years before. The majority of those who spoke on the floor that day fervently wished that somehow things could be changed, but what to do they knew not.

And dare any today criticize them? What assurance have we that, in like circumstances, we would show any greater wisdom? Yet we must learn from their experiences, and the experience of the years since. Indeed, the door was opened and the body went through it. In due time the effects became more prominent, displaying themselves in hitherto unimagined ways. And still there were those who protested. Elder L. E. Froom, founding editor of *Ministry* magazine, once asked:

"How dare a man contemplate, or have the temerity to present, the degree of doctor of divinity, gained in the universities of Babylon, as a credential for teaching or preaching this threefold message, the second stipulation of which is, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen.... Come out of her my people'? How dare we accept such a Babylonian credential in lieu of mastery of the truth? Shall a man go into Babylon to gain strength and wisdom to call men out of Babylon? To ask the question is but to disclose how far some have compromised with Babylon, as they have gone back to Babylon to drink from her wells of wisdom. Oh, for the living waters of truth fresh from the Word!

"Someone needs to sound an alarm. We need to grip ourselves and halt a growing trend that, if it becomes entrenched, will bring disaster through neutralizing our message."³⁴

It has been many years since Elder Froom offered his thoughts. It has been even longer since the brethren voted to seek accreditation. During that time we have seen many "doors": doors of opportunity, doors of temptation, doors which we could either open or close. What have we learned from it all? What *can* we learn from it all?

In 1910 Ellen White wrote, "Now, while the world is favorable toward the teaching of the health reform principles, moves should be made to secure for our own physicians the privileges of imparting medical instruction to our young people who would otherwise be led to attend the worldly medical colleges. *The time will come when it will be more difficult than it is now to arrange for the training of our young people in medical missionary lines.*"³⁵

What have we learned from our experience? If nothing else, let us learn that Ellen White was right.

1. *Medical Ministry*, 238
2. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13,59
3. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 100-101
4. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11,218
5. *Battle Creek Letters*, 13
6. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4,280
7. *Loma Linda Messages*, 560
8. *Ibid.*, 560-561
9. *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 3 (Second Edition), 8
10. *Loma Linda Messages*, 303-304
11. *Loma Linda Messages*, 305
12. *Ibid.*, 365
13. *Ibid.*, 445, emphasis supplied
14. *Ibid.*, 427-428. Notice that Manuscript 71,1909 (pages 424-428) and Manuscript 105,1909 (pages 443-445) depict the same interview. See *Medical Practice and the Educational Program at Loma Linda*, Ellen G. White Publications, (1953), 75-78 for the full text.
15. *Ibid.*, 447
16. *Loma Linda Messages*, 343-344, quoting from *Review and Herald*, October 15,1903
17. *Ibid.*, 452-453
18. *Ibid.*, 484-485, emphasis supplied
19. See *Loma Linda Messages*, 305, and the minutes of the March 25,1914, constituency meeting of the College of Medical Evangelists (*Medical Practice and the Educational Program at Loma Linda*, 163)
20. *Ibid.*, 542-544
21. *Medical Practice and the Educational Program at Loma Linda*, 163-164
22. *Ibid.*, 123-124
23. *Ibid.*, 152-153
24. *Ibid.*, 131,143,145
25. *Ibid.*, 158
26. *Ibid.*, 161
27. *Loma Linda Messages*, 388
28. *Medical Practice and the Educational Program at Loma Linda*, 163-164
29. *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, 248
30. *Ibid.*, 250-251
31. W C. White in *Review and Herald*, September 28,1916 (*The Story of Our Health Message*, 400)
32. *Medical Practice and the Educational Program at Loma Linda*, 171
33. "Speech of Elder W. H. Branson, delivered at the Fall Council, October 30,1935," 1-2
34. *The Ministry*, April 1944
35. *Loma Linda Messages*, 543, emphasis supplied

CHAPTER FORTY

William Henry Branson on Academic Accreditation

At the Autumn Council of 1935 W. H. Branson, then a vice president of the General Conference, delivered the findings and suggestions of the "Survey Commission on Education." The Commission had been asked to investigate the effect of the policy of limited accreditation for Adventist Colleges voted four years before.

BROTHER Chairman (Elder C. H. Watson, President of the General Conference), it was in 1931 at our Autumn Council in Omaha the question of accrediting our schools was given consideration, at which time it was decided we should enter upon an accrediting program for our educational institutions.

Authorization was given at that time for Junior and Senior Colleges to seek accrediting, and although certain restrictions as safeguards were thrown around the action, I think that all the brethren who were present at the Omaha Council when this action was taken entered into the proposition with fear and trembling and many misgivings, and even those who were most favorable to the plan recognized that it was confronted with great danger and that probably we would find that there would be some losses along the way.

It was described at that time by one of our leading workers as being a war measure. It was stated in the

action itself that it was an emergency measure. The reason for the emergency seemed to be the fact that we were facing a situation, as we understood it, that would make it all but impossible to go on with certain lines of training unless our schools were accredited. That is true of the medical work. They stated that it would be impossible for the college to receive students from junior and senior colleges unless these colleges were accredited with regional accrediting associations.

It was also stated that we had reached a time when teacher training could not be carried on in any unaccredited school in a satisfactory way. The requirements were such as to make necessary, they said, the accrediting of schools for the training of our teachers.

Then there were also a number of us that, in the training of nurses, thought it was necessary in some places that the pre-nursing work be given in accredited schools. So we felt under great pressure as in coun-

cil we studied this question four years ago and arrived at the conclusions I have already stated.

I think it should be stated in the beginning of our introduction to this report which we bring you today, and in our discussion of it, that it was not our educational men, at least not as a group, who brought this pressure upon us at the council; but it seemed to be the general conviction of the leadership of the movement. We went into it together; no one group of workers can be singled out at whom we can point the finger and state that they led us into it. It was said that we went into it unitedly believing that it was the best thing to do under the circumstances.

There were certain safeguards. After the action authorizing the schools to receive accrediting, these recommendations were passed which I have and would like to read to you and by which we endeavored to minimize the danger we knew would attend an effort of this sort. (The action taken following the authorization of accrediting was here read—)

"Whereas, We know full well from observation and repeated warnings from the Spirit of Prophecy that by sending our teachers to the universities of the world for advanced degrees we are exposing them to great dangers, as is evidenced by the number of our men who have already in this way lost their hold upon God, and realizing that there is great danger to our system of Christian education through the molding influence of these worldly schools on our teachers,

"We recommend, That in the selection of teachers to attend the universities, only persons of outstanding Christian experience and who have been successful in Christian work should be chosen—persons whose faith in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy is well grounded, and who realize that in attending the university they are being exposed to subtle and almost unconscious influences of infidelity—and persons who believe with all their hearts in the superiority of Christian education."

These are the safeguards the Council of 1931 endeavored to throw around this plan. It will be noticed that it was definitely and frankly recognized that we were facing the danger of placing these seasoned, solid ones who would be chosen to be sent to the university along certain lines in great danger. In discussing the action it was stated that a number of men had already lost their hold upon God as the result of such an endeavor to secure standing by getting worldly degrees, and understanding that fact it seemed as though the pressure was so great as to make it almost absolutely necessary for us to accredit, and it drove us to the place where we felt we should have to take some steps, and so the brethren joined in agreeing that we would authorize our schools to seek accrediting.

Four years have gone by since that time. These have been years in which we have gained a great deal of experience. We were launched at that time upon an uncharted course. No one knew much about what it involved or what was involved in accrediting. Some thought they knew

a great deal about it, but it has been discovered that some of the information that we had was not accurate. Some of it may have been more or less accurate, but we have gained an experience. We have revised our plans and our ideas a good many times along the way during these four years. We have spent a great deal of money—much more than some supposed would be necessary in securing the accrediting we received. It has been spent along a number of lines, common among them, teacher training.

As it was authorized at the time, our colleges have been sending their teachers [to non-Adventist universities] during this time of transition. The teachers were not able to go unsupported, and it has been necessary in the colleges to help support them to get this training, and also to pay the expenses of their tuition while attending the university. Most of this has been done during the school year, making it necessary to substitute teachers to take the place of those who are in training.

The expense was also incurred in putting up more buildings; and adding other necessary equipment was demanded by the representative of the accrediting board. In some places this has become a large sum. Then there came to the attention of the board other things. There should be an endowment, an income, in our schools, or in lieu of that, some guaranteed income above the student's tuition and above anything we have planned upon or provided for in our schools before. In some instances the subsidy required was at least double

the amount that had been coming to our colleges before.

It was also necessary that our schools should be out of debt, and in order to accomplish this it has been necessary for conference organizations to assume large indebtednesses held by these institutions, and the conferences took over the burden of paying this indebtedness.

During these four years, two of our six senior colleges have reached the goal and become accredited. These are two schools in the West. None of our other senior colleges have reached the goal, and some of them find that they are far from reaching it yet—just how far no one knows. Just what may be required in them if they seek accreditation, we are not able to discover. Representatives of the college accrediting bodies will not tell us. They will make suggestions of this and that and say you have failed here or there, but they will not tell us definitely just what we must do; and when what they said has been done we think surely we will be accredited. But we have still been groping in the dark. We have been trying to find out what is necessary, but we find other things necessary, and so we go on year after year.

The struggle became so great in the spring of this year, when two of our colleges in the central West were turned down for the second or third time, that their boards after some joint council decided to appeal to the General Conference Committee for counsel as to what they should do next. Whether or not both of these schools—fairly close together and in the same territory—should continue

to seek for accrediting has been discussed. They asked that study be given to this by the General Conference through some commission appointed for the educational situation in the North American field by giving it careful study; and so at the time of the Spring Council of this year, a commission which is to report this morning was brought into being.

That commission was given full power, so far as study of our educational work is concerned. In our consideration of this question of accrediting, the committee was asked to take up for consideration the present trend in our educational work, the question of what modification should be made in our educational program, or anything else it wanted to study and bring in recommendations for in connection with our educational situation. I would like to say that our report this morning will not cover so wide a field as the authorization would warrant. The reason for that is given in the report itself.

During the many months that have passed since the Spring Council, the commission has been at work practically all the time in one way or another. We had the first meeting before we left Washington after the Spring Council had made the appointment. At the time we proceeded to appoint a fact-finding committee of five men including Brother Conrad who was at that time in South America, and that committee was asked to visit all of our senior and junior colleges in North America to glean certain information the commission desired to have before it in many lines and to bring their report

to the meeting of the educational commission to be held prior to this council. Brother Conrad was recalled from South America.

The committee has spent a great deal of time going from school to school and setting down a careful survey on the situation of each and every institution, and we have the benefit of the large array of facts which they were able to secure, during the time between that time and this.

We believe, Brother Chairman, as a result of our study of this situation that the safeguards that we tried to throw around the policy of accrediting four years ago when we entered upon this course have very largely broken down. Therefore we entered upon a course that we did not plan on, and we know that things have gone farther than was anticipated. We were facing dangers and perils in this matter of accrediting our colleges that were little dreamed of at that time when this action was taken four years ago. For instead of a few teachers being selected carefully by college boards as was recommended, teachers who would present outstanding Christian experience, and who have been successful in their Christian work, whose fidelity to the Bible and Testimonies is unquestioned, we have found that a large class of very young and immature people have been finding their way into the universities believing that [to be] a highway to appointment in our institutional work.

They have not waited to gain these years of Christian experience—the experience that comes through years of Christian service.

They have not waited to be chosen by some board that would carefully weigh the question of whether or not this or that individual should go to the university. Scores of these young people have been going from the graduating classes of our colleges into the universities believing it would facilitate their going into our work or finding employment in an educational institution.

Our commission brought us information that from one college alone thirty had gone into the university for further training during these years. We are told that in one university there was a get-together of our Seventh-day Adventist young people for a social evening, and there were forty present at the social, and not all were reached by the invitation.

We might multiply facts like that which indicated to us, as we believe, that this thing has rather gotten out of hand. It has gone away beyond anything the denomination planned, and the byproducts of this are found in the schools where boards have been pressed by the accreditation bodies to put men on their faculties who have advanced degrees, and they did not know where to turn for men of experience and outstanding integrity to fill the positions. They have felt obliged to take some of these immature men who have not been selected but have pushed their own way into the university and secured their degree and presented themselves for employment.

We believe, Brother Chairman, that in this we face one of our greatest dangers, for instead of careful selection we have come to the place

where we have been forced to take men who otherwise would not have been chosen for the responsible places to which they were called. I do not think this has been done to any large extent as yet, but we find the tendency growing in college boards as more and more pressure is brought to bear by accrediting bodies; and the boards find themselves at their wits' end to know what to do to build up a faculty that will commend themselves to these organizations.

We believe as a result of what has taken place the wrong emphasis is being placed on certain things in our work. We believe undue emphasis is being placed upon the idea of securing degrees from worldly institutions rather than training our youth for spiritual service in the cause of God. I suppose many of us could testify honestly that we have been hearing more during the past four years about degrees and accreditation and universities than we have heard in our lifetimes before.

Some of us have had to learn a new vocabulary in the language in trying to fathom what this is all about and what it means. I remember a few years ago we didn't hear such things as we are talking about now, but the emphasis is being placed upon the importance of worldly studies and degrees, and this is having a mighty influence. As a result of what they see in the way of denominational sanction and in the way of denominational encouragement in sending teachers to the universities, they [Adventist youth] are led to believe it is all right for them to go to universities and seek this training, and scores are going.

Many of these will be lost, will lose their hold upon God, and will not fill the position of responsibility in this cause it was designed of God they should fill. If they should fill positions of responsibility, many of them would bring into the denominational work influences that would lead farther and farther afield from the original purpose that was in the hearts of the men who established this work.

Your commission believes therefore as a denomination that we are drifting and that it is entrusted to us at this Autumn Council of 1935 to endeavor to call a halt and to retrace our course and to drive new stakes and determine by the help of God that we will rectify anything that is wrong in what we undertook to do four years ago.

As was pointed out by our General Conference President in his address that was read yesterday morning, other religious bodies have passed this way before us. As a result of their efforts to secure worldly recognition, we know they made shipwreck of their faith. There are exceptions in individual cases, but that statement is almost universally true. I think I would like to emphasize this fact by reading from an article Brother Wilcox wrote in the *Review* which I think sets the situation clearly before us. This is from Andrew D. Harmon, the president of Transylvania College, an article which appeared in the [magazine] *Current History*, December 1930.

"The hitherto undisputed claim that the church college carried a more wholesome moral and spiritual atmosphere has been a com-

PELLING argument in its favor. But this claim is seriously questioned today. The requirements of standardizing agencies have compelled church colleges to shift their emphasis from morality to scholarship. This has changed the whole mental pattern and modified the spirit of church colleges. They have not developed in recent years along lines that express the urge and soul of vital Christianity. They have given up their natural element of greatest strength, religion, and taken up the tax-supported institution's element of greatest weakness, standardization....

"The forces that terminate institutions have a long drift, but they move inexorably. Usually the change is at hand before society is aware. The passing of the church college is now taking place and most of its devotees are looking upon the transition; some are even players in the drama and do not recognize it." *Review and Herald*, October 24, 1935

I wondered as I read this whether Seventh-day Adventists were included in the last remark of this statement. "The passing of the church college is now taking place and most of its devotees are looking upon the transition; some are even players in the drama and do not recognize it." We have been in the period of transition for a period of four years. We recognize on every hand that there has been a shift of standards, a shift in the ideals, a shift in the emphasis till many of our people throughout the churches of this land are becoming alarmed. We hear it on every hand. There is alarm, and that alarm is itself in the hearts of our

best leaders and laymen that make up the membership of our churches.

Since other denominations have passed along this way, and since, as this man states, the universal result has been the passing of the church college, dropping the ideals of the founders in the establishment of these schools, it seems to us of this commission that we need to restate [reconsider?] whether or not we are able to follow the same course they have been following, and follow it to its conclusion, and still stand against the tide that has swept them off their feet. Can we maintain our ideals in their purity and yet reach to the fullest extent the recognition from the world, and agree to being standardized by the world, which means that we must be under the domination of these worldly organizations?

I hold in my hand here a report that was rendered by the representatives of one of these accrediting organizations—a report that was made concerning one of our colleges, a recent report. This college was being surveyed by representatives of the accrediting board to ascertain whether or not their application for accrediting should be granted. In the very outset of the report, we find the following statement was made:

"The original articles of incorporation in this particular college definitely state that the college was organized to provide special opportunity for men and women to become acquainted with the mission fields and to have education in branches and methods for the same. The school was a part of the missionary program of the church. That

ideal has persisted to a considerable extent and has affected the spirit of the curriculum and methods of the college, but a change in emphasis has slowly taken place and now education as a preparation for various careers and most of all for the art of living is the dominant idea."

So we are commended here by representatives of the accrediting board, and the comment was because of the fact that we have changed our ideals and are farther away from the idea of training men and women for the mission fields of the world, and coming to the place where we train them for the various careers and the art of living. And what has been said of that school may possibly be observed in some of our other institutions. I am reminded of this earnest appeal in the eleventh Psalm, the third verse, where he says in speaking of the drift in his day, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

I want to present that question to you in the light of what we have seen happen to other churches, in the light of the accrediting board, and what they say of the drift in our own institutions, and in the light of what we see in the way of scores of apostacies. I want to bring this appeal from the commission that if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

And some of us are very much afraid of what is going on by our own inauguration four years ago, that is to some degree—God only knows to what degree—destroying the foundations of this denomination and bringing into us and our work an element that is altogether

unsafe, if our doctrines are to remain pure, if we are to remain loyal to the ideals that led to the establishment of this denomination and our institutions in the beginning.

I think of the words to ancient Israel, spoken by a prophet who was trying to speak evil concerning Israel and whom the Lord made to speak a blessing instead of a curse. And Balaam spake these words, "From the top of the rocks I see him, from the hills I behold him. Lo, the people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Numbers 23:9. This has been God's program all through the ages. Israel shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations. And I believe this has a very definite application to the Israel of God here in this last generation, as He endeavors to convert the people and to take them to heaven. It seems to me that Israel needs to be free from the dominating influences of the world, from the government of worldly organizations that know not God in these times.

I read in [*Testimonies to the Church,*] volume 6, 145:

"Though in many respects our institutions of learning have swung into worldly conformity, though step by step they have advanced toward the world, they are prisoners of hope. Fate has not so woven its meshes about their workings that they need to remain helpless and in uncertainty. If they will listen to His voice and follow in His ways, God will correct and enlighten them, and bring them back to their upright position of distinction from the world."

I wonder if we have drifted step by step backward since the years when this earnest appeal was made to us; whether we would not have to admit that we have drifted far from that state. Oh, I hope that it is still true that we are prisoners of hope! I hope there is a way back to God's plan and original purposes, that the founders of this faith had in their hearts when they started out to train men and women in Christian service. If we will listen to God's voice and follow in His way, God will correct and enlighten us. I hope God will give us the correction that we need at this time. We do not profess to know what ought to be done, but we have suggestions. We know the foundation [principles] underlying this great educational system of Seventh-day Adventists must not be disturbed. They must stand if we, as a people, are to stand in our responsibility of carrying a peculiar message to the world preparing for the coming of Christ. Worldly standards are becoming more and more apparent. No one person is to blame, but we are to blame for we have done the thing that has led to the situation we find ourselves in.

Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 86, says:

"There is danger that our college will be turned away from its original design. God's purpose has been made known—that our people should have an opportunity to study the sciences, and at the same time to learn the requirements of His word. Biblical lectures should be given; the study of the Scriptures should have the first place in our system of education."

On page 532 of the same book:

"God has revealed to me that we are in positive danger of bringing into our educational work the customs and fashions that prevail in the schools of the world. If teachers are not guarded, they will place on the necks of their students worldly yokes instead of the yoke of Christ. The plan of the schools we shall establish in these closing years of the message is to be of an entirely different order from those we have instituted."

Testimonies, vol. 6, 142 :

"We need now to begin over again. Reforms must be entered into with heart, and soul, and will. Errors may be hoary with age; but age does not make error truth, nor truth error. Altogether too long have the old customs and habits been followed. The Lord would now have every idea that is false put away from teachers and students. We are not at liberty to teach that which shall meet the world's standard or the standard of the church, simply because it is the custom to do so. The lessons which Christ taught are to be the standard. That which the Lord has spoken concerning the instruction to be given in our schools is to be strictly regarded; for if there is not in some respects an education of an altogether different character from that which has been carried on in some of our schools, we need not have gone to the expense of purchasing lands and erecting school-buildings."

And from page 534 of *Fundamentals of Christian Education* I read:

"There is constant danger among our people that those who engage in labor in our schools and sanitariums will entertain the idea that they

must get in line with the world, study the things which the world studies, and become familiar with the things that the world becomes familiar with. This is one of the greatest mistakes that could be made. We shall make grave mistakes unless we give special attention to the searching of the Word."

From page 535:

"Light has been given me that tremendous pressures will be brought upon every Seventh-day Adventist with whom the world can get into close connection. Those who seek the education that the world esteems so highly are gradually led further and further from the principles of truth until they become educated worldlings. At what a price have they gained their education! They have parted with the Holy Spirit of God; they have chosen to accept what the world calls knowledge in the place of the truths which God has committed to men through His ministers and prophets and apostles. And there are some who, having secured this worldly education, think that they can introduce it into our schools. But let me tell you that you must not take what the world calls the higher education and bring it into our schools and sanitariums and churches. We need to understand these things. I speak to you definitely; this must not be done."

As a result of the study the Educational Commission has given these matters as we have reviewed them personally and collectively, [as well as] this instruction that is upon the record books that chartered our course in establishing our institutions, it has become a profound con-

viction with us that we are drifting and that we have departed far from the blueprint that God gave to this people in the matter of establishing and operating our schools. We therefore have been led to the conviction that it is not necessary for this denomination to accredit six senior colleges.

We do not believe the pressure we seemed to be under four years ago was all actual: part of it, we believe, was unreal. And we believe some of the pressure that did exist at that time has been lessened. We have come to a time in carrying forward our medical work when the accrediting boards governing medical college work have reduced the number of medical students that can be received by the college annually to a hundred or less. Some of those who are accepted by our medical college come from outside institutions not of our faith; some come from private Seventh-day Adventist schools; eighty can be received annually into our medical college. We do not believe that it is necessary to have a large number of educational institutions accredited by worldly organizations in order to prepare such a small number of pre-medical students.

We find, according to our investigations, what seems to be accurate information, that many of our schools can go on with teachers' training work by maintaining what they have already accredited with State Departments of Education and with local educational institutions. And the question of teacher training does not loom up so large as it did four years ago. We feel that the ques-

tion of training nurses is not so acute. The number taking pre-nursing work is not so acute that it requires wholesale accrediting of our Seventh-day Adventist schools. But with the accrediting of our Junior College Department and our Junior Colleges as such in certain localities—and few of them—we would be able, at least for the present, to take care of the needs of having some of our schools standardized and recognized in certain courses in order to do preparatory work.

Therefore, we believe that we should take steps, very definite steps, at this Council, looking toward a very definite effort to minimize the dangers that we face and the perils that we are facing on every hand as a result of the step we took four years ago. We believe that if two senior colleges in North America were to secure accrediting of their senior work, it would furnish us ample facilities for the giving of courses where senior college accreditation is necessary, and if that is true, as a people we should set ourselves to the task of operating the rest of our institutions without seeking for worldly recognition. We believe we ought to send out a clarion call from this council—a call to our youth who are seeking training in worldly institutions to come out of these institutions and endeavor to help them find places of responsibility in the cause of God where they can gain experiences that will fit them for a life of missionary endeavor.

We are ready to admit that in our action of four years ago we went too far. We find that we made a mistake. We believe that authority was given

that gave too wide a range to the plan of our institutions seeking for accrediting from these organizations, and if it was a mistake we believe that God will forgive that mistake and that He will lead us back to the right plan only as we are willing to face and acknowledge the mistake and turn our faces toward the truth and find the way out.

We believe that we should endeavor to change the emphasis that has been placed on worldly standards and degrees, that we should begin to turn the emphasis in our educational work upon training young men and women to go out

and preach this message with power, young women to go out as Bible workers and also teach this message with power, and to train young men and women to go to the mission fields in the world with strong abiding faith in God and this message, without having that faith lessened or in any way minimized by contact with worldly schools and organizations that do not believe in God and this message. We should train them in our own schools and ignore standards of the world to a large degree—to the degree that these standards modify the standards of Seventh-day Adventists.

CHAPTER FORTY••ONE

Adventism and Walter Martin

OPPORTUNITY came knocking at the door of Seventh-day Adventism in the spring of 1955. Walter Martin, while the director of the cult and apologetics department for Zondervan Publishing Company, had written a book entitled *The Rise of the Cults* in which he stated that Adventists belonged to that despised category. Now, however, he wanted to learn more.

He had been commissioned to thoroughly investigate Adventism on behalf of *Eternity* magazine. It was understood that his research would lead to an unfavorable conclusion; nonetheless he expressed a desire to conduct a fair and complete evaluation. To do so would require access to both the human and the historical resources of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His request was simple: Please co-operate.

In retrospect, many have suggested that to do so was a mistake. But we may well ponder what we would have done had the request been put to us. And, too, it is only with some difficulty that we can imagine the apostle Paul refusing to speak of the mysteries of the gospel, even to a potentially hostile audience. All hindsight aside, the request was granted and in March of that year Walter Martin, accompanied by George E. Cannon, a professor of Greek on the faculty of the Nyack, New York, Missionary College, traveled to Washington, D.C., for their first interview.

In short order it became apparent that Martin was well armed with detailed questions which would require detailed answers. Further, both questions and answers would have to be committed to writing so that all parties could have a definite record of what had been said. For the moment though, the Adventist delegation (L. E. Froom, scholar and author; W. E. Read, field secretary of the General Conference; and T. E. Unruh, president of the East Pennsylvania Conference) supplied Martin with books and periodicals supporting the positions they had outlined as the church's doctrinal beliefs.

The following night was a busy one: L. E. Froom prepared an initial response of twenty pages to the questions posed; Martin read Adventist literature until 2:00 A.M. When the two groups met the following day, the Adventists were pleased to hear that their examiner found them deserving of the name Christian—provided, that is, that the materials they had given him correctly represented the denomination as a whole.

Referring to the 1931 statement of fundamental beliefs was only partially convincing. He claimed to have found unorthodox statements in books, pam-

phlets, and periodicals, and he wanted to know why. When he produced examples which he considered "unequivocally heretical," "the Adventist scholars were both shocked and appalled." They could only reply that "correction had begun."²

As the series of conferences continued, this matter was to resurface repeatedly. Clearly these meetings were going to be neither a short-lived nor simple proposition. Early in the month of August, Froom urged an expansion of the Adventist delegation. R. A. Anderson, secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association and founding editor of *Ministry* magazine, had been informally involved since April; he now was asked to lend his talents to the work on a regular basis.

By August 25 the conferences had entered a new phase. Traveling to Doylestown, Pennsylvania, the Adventist representatives met for two days, not only with Walter Martin and George Cannon, but also with Donald Grey Barnhouse, the editor of *Eternity* magazine. Barchdale, the spacious home of Dr. and Mrs. Barnhouse, provided the setting for these meetings. It was here that Dr. Barnhouse was challenged by his own son to publish to the world that he found Seventh-day Adventists to be truly Christian.

But still, a difficulty had arisen with the charge of unorthodox teachings: what could be done; what *should* be done?

Meeting Accusations

The troublesome issues involved accusations of teaching 'Arianism (the view that Christ was a created being), a sinful nature of Christ, incomplete atonement theory, Galatianism (salvation by law keeping), and extreme sectarianism."³ The Evangelicals pointed to the lack of a formal Seventh-day Adventist creed as the root of the problem. How could any denomination ever maintain doctrinal integrity without a creed to define the boundaries of what was to be considered acceptable?

For their part, the Adventists asserted that these areas of difficulty were not representative of mainline Adventism and that the General Conference would investigate such instances. If the Adventists were to distance themselves from these points of concern, it would be necessary to demonstrate to the Evangelicals that there was indeed a widespread consensus within the denomination which did not countenance such teaching.

Two avenues presented themselves for the accomplishment of the task. A travel itinerary was arranged for Walter Martin to see Adventism in a variety of settings ranging from the east coast to the west coast of the United States and then on to mission stations overseas. In a second line of action, plans were made to formalize the Adventist responses to Martin's questions, and then to have these published as a book having received the careful scrutiny of church leaders the world over. This volume, of course, came to be known as *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*. This latter objective was given into the hands of a fourteen-member committee composed of R. R. Figuhr (General Conference president and chairman of the committee), A. V. Olson, W B. Ochs,

L. K. Dickson, H. L. Rudy, A. L. Ham, J. I. Robison, W R. Beach, C. L. Torrey, E D. Nichol, T E. Unruh, R. A. Anderson, L. E. Froom, and W E. Read.⁴

Passing quickly over another year of conferences, we may conclude that the efforts of the Adventist representatives were convincing. The formal discussions between Adventists and Evangelicals came to a natural close. *Questions on Doctrine* was published by the Review and Herald late in 1957. Delays plagued the work of Walter Martin, but *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* was finally produced by Zondervan in 1960. A momentous work had been completed; but for the Seventh-day Adventist Church there were to come decades of unforeseen, and still unresolved, conflict.

Revision of Publications

The Adventist brethren, in 1955, had assured the Evangelicals that the "unorthodox" points of doctrine were "being corrected." Perhaps this response was simply spur of the moment, a general reply as to what the denomination tried to do with all heretical teachings. On the other hand, perhaps it was more. There is evidence to support the contention that some within the denomination were already taking active steps to eliminate from the collective Adventist mind certain doctrines which did not accord well with the orthodox views of the Evangelical world.

Perhaps a very few extremely perceptive readers had noticed a revision in the 1946 reprinting of the book *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*. Certainly nothing much was said of it at the time. But a simple comparison of this edition with former ones quickly shows that the section entitled 'A Sinless Life' had been rewritten. No longer did this volume reflect the consistent position held by the denomination over the last ninety-four years. It stood as the bellwether of things to come in muting the heretofore unanimous position of the Adventist Church that Christ had accepted, not the sinless nature of man at his creation, but rather the nature of the sinful men whom He sought to save.

Six years passed before the first echoes of this new line of thought were to be heard. The July 10 and 17, 1952, editions of the *Review and Herald* carried a two-part editorial which picked up the strain: 'Adventists believe that Christ, the 'last Adam,' possessed, on His human side, a nature like that of the 'first man Adam,' a nature free of any defiling taint of sin.'

Here, set in a confusing context which could only leave readers wondering as to the author's intent, was an isolated statement of a Christology entirely new to Adventism. We can gain, perhaps, a glimpse of the source of this comment in the much-respected editor's closing thoughts:

"In conclusion, a word of counsel to some of our Adventist writers and speakers may be in order.... When we speak of the taint of sin, the germs of sin, we should remember that we are using metaphorical language. Critics, especially those who see the Scriptures through Calvinistic eyes, read into the term 'sinful flesh' something that Adventist theology does not require. Thus if

we use the term 'sinful flesh' in regard to Christ's human nature, as some of our writers have done, we lay ourselves open to misunderstanding."

It would appear that the criticism of non-Adventists—and perhaps especially of *calvinistic* non-Adventists—had become enough of an issue as to attract attention by 1952. It would also appear—though this is a matter of speculation—that by 1952 it had been forgotten that the most prominent author applying the term "sinful flesh" to the nature of Christ was none other than Ellen G. White.

Reaction to Barnhouse Article

Perhaps the single greatest step toward the development of new Adventist doctrine was not one taken by Adventists at all. Donald Grey Barnhouse at last met the challenge put to him by his son, and the September 1956 issue of *Eternity* carried his article 'Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?' causing a temporary loss of nearly one fourth of the magazine's subscribers. It was an article which scandalized much of the Evangelical world. Certain points of the article also scandalized members of the denomination it was meant to commend.

In his article Dr. Barnhouse told of the shock caused to his new-found brethren when, in the course of one of the early conference meetings, they were presented with evidence of Adventist teaching contrary to the positions they were now advocating. "He pointed out to them that in their bookstore adjoining the building in which these meetings were taking place a certain volume published by them and written by one of their ministers categorically stated the contrary to what they were now asserting. The leaders sent for the book, discovered that Mr. Martin was correct, and immediately brought this fact to the attention of the General Conference officers, that this situation might be remedied and such publications be corrected. This same procedure was repeated regarding the nature of Christ while in the flesh, which the majority of the denomination has always held to be sinless, holy, and perfect despite the fact that certain of their writers have occasionally gotten into print with contrary views completely repugnant to the church at large. They further explained to Mr. Martin that they had among their number certain members of their 'lunatic fringe' even as there are similar wild-eyed irresponsibles in every field of fundamental Christianity."⁵

A small number of Adventists, reading Barnhouse's critique of their church, were concerned. It appeared that he was right when he said "the position of the Adventists seems to some of us in certain cases to be a new position." Not all were pleased to see the church so hastily adopting new positions. And when the article spoke of "the majority group of sane leadership which is determined to put the brakes on any members who seek to hold views divergent from that of the responsible leadership of the denomination"⁶ they worried more yet.

Dr. Barnhouse was pointed in his evaluation of the doctrine of the investigative judgment and the Most Holy Place ministry of Christ beginning in

1844: "It is to my mind, therefore, nothing more than a human, face-saving idea! It should also be realized that some uninformed Seventh-day Adventists took this idea and carried it to fantastic literalistic extremes. Mr. Martin and I heard the Adventist leaders say, flatly, that they repudiate all such extremes. This they have said in no uncertain terms. Further, they do not believe, as some of their earlier teachers taught, that Jesus' atoning work was not completed on Calvary but instead that He was still carrying on a second ministering work since 1844. This idea is also totally repudiated."

In summary, he made it clear that "we personally do not believe that there is even a suspicion of a verse in Scripture to sustain such a peculiar position [as the investigative judgment], and we further believe that any effort to establish it is *stale, flat, and unprofitable!*"

Ministry Magazine

Following this public announcement of the conferences' outcome, the slow pace of change quickened decidedly. We find new ground being broken in the pages of *Ministry* magazine in September of 1956, and February and April of 1957. The first of these sources boldly proclaimed that Christ in His incarnation "took [the] sinless nature of Adam before [the] fall."⁸ The second announced a doctrinal position never before propounded by official Adventism, that "the sacrificial act on the cross [was] a complete, perfect, and final atonement for man's sin."

Perplexingly, the same article speaks first of "the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross," then of "the ministry of our heavenly High Priest in the sanctuary above on the antitypical day of atonement," and finally concludes that each aspect is "incomplete without the other, and each [is] the indispensable complement of the other." Apparently the writer saw no contradiction in all this.'

In the third of these historic issues of *Ministry* it was announced that "when the incarnate God broke into human history and became one with the race, it is our understanding that He possessed the sinlessness of the nature with which Adam was created in Eden."

M. L. Andreasen

These developments proved of great concern to one aged and respected worker of the church. M. L. Andreasen, longtime administrator, educator, and author was universally considered an authority on the doctrine of the sanctuary. As early as the fifteenth of February, 1957, he felt constrained to raise a call of alarm.¹⁰ Writing first a personal letter to a single individual at denominational headquarters in Washington, D.C., Elder Andreasen's protest grew until it was heard throughout North America and to a lesser extent throughout the world field.¹¹

Though originally concerned only with the doctrinal pronouncements in *Ministry* and *Questions on Doctrine*, Elder Andreasen soon found cause for even greater distress. Early summer 1957 saw a copy of the minutes of the

E. G. White Estate meetings of the month of May placed in his hands. This was, to be sure, an unusual violation of the normal confidentiality afforded such a group. Andreasen believed it to be providential.

From these minutes he learned that on the first of May two men (whom Andreasen refers to only as Elders "R" and "A") approached the board with the suggestion that certain statements of the Spirit of Prophecy be "clarified" by the inclusion of explanatory footnotes. It appears that these two gentlemen, and others of their "group" had "become acutely aware of Ellen G. White statements which indicate that the atoning work of Christ is now in progress in the heavenly sanctuary."¹²

In light of this concern it was "suggested to the trustees that some footnotes or appendix notes might appear in certain of the E. G. White books, clarifying very largely in the words of Ellen White our understanding of the various phases of the atoning work of Christ."

Since "it was felt by the brethren who joined the trustees in this discussion, that this is a matter which will come prominently to the front in the near future," it was suggested that "we would do well to move forward with the preparation and inclusion of such notes in future printings of the E. G. White books."¹³

The final decision was postponed for some time, but it was eventually concluded that such a plan was not wise. In the meantime, however, Andreasen drew the attention of many workers of the church to the developments taking place in Washington. He thus found himself in a position of controversy with the denomination, and was accordingly warned in a letter dated December 15, 1957, that to continue publicizing the matter would "undoubtedly bring up the matter of your relationship to the church."¹⁴

A month and a half later he was asked why he had never asked for a hearing at the General Conference. This was a new thought to him. After the extensive correspondence he had carried on, and since the matter had been repeatedly declared closed by General Conference representatives, he had never thought that it was his responsibility to ask for a hearing. But if that was what was needed, by all means, he would ask.

In fact, he was more than willing to have a hearing. His only request was "that the hearing be public, or that a stenographer be present, and that I receive a copy of the minutes."

In response, the brethren suggested that "a tape recording would likely be the most practical way of doing this." Noting, however, that no comment had been made of his receiving a copy of this recording, Andreasen wrote on the twenty-first of February seeking explicit confirmation of his request. In response he was told that "the brethren had in mind recording on tape the proceedings of the meeting. This would provide a full record of what is said and done. We assume that such a complete record would be agreeable to you."

The wording *seemed* to say that he would be given a copy—but, still, the brethren never really came right out and said it in so many words. Would it be

impolite to ask yet again? But he had no choice, the condition was imperative—he *had to know*. On the twelfth of March he wrote again: "I am still waiting for definite word that not only will a tape recording be made, but that I will get a copy."

In response he was told that "in discussing this with the officers, it occurred to the brethren that we do this, which would seem fair to all concerned: a secretary be appointed from the group to write out the conclusions we arrive at, and these be submitted to the whole group for approval, after which each will be given a copy. We believe, Brother Andreasen, that this suggestion will be agreeable to you."

Not surprisingly, this suggestion was *not* agreeable to Andreasen. "There would be *no* stenographer, *no* tape recording, *no* minutes at all, but one of the men would write down the *conclusions* arrived at. And that was supposed to be agreeable to me! It certainly was not agreeable to me. It was a complete breach of faith. It was like substituting Leah for Rachel."¹⁵

The impasse continued. The brethren in Washington felt that Andreasen was completely out of line in publicizing his concerns to the membership of the church. For his part, Andreasen became more and more convinced that something was wrong, seriously wrong, with the leaders of the church he loved. In desperation he published and circulated the familiar series of six "Letters to the Churches" now reprinted in book form under that title.

Soon the aged veteran's health began to falter. No longer able to carry on the vigorous schedule of former days, his influence was not so strongly felt. Rumors, some quite far-fetched, began to circulate. In a private letter of June 1959 he tried to set the record straight: "Let me assure you that I am in good health—not a mental case, not senile, not even dead, as has been reported." And in regard to doctrine? "No, I have not recanted." But it was of little use. Eight months later the recantation story was still circulating.¹⁶

On April 6, 1961, the denomination's representatives assembled for Spring Council registered their strong displeasure with the course Andreasen had chosen. The ministerial credentials which he had held for so many years were suspended. Two reasons were cited: 1) bringing discord and confusion into the ranks by voice and pen, and 2) refusing to respond favorably to appeals to make a statement of his differences to the General Conference except on his own particular terms.¹⁷

Not informed of the action till after the fact, Andreasen no doubt found it one of the greatest sorrows of his life. Perhaps it was divine mercy which allowed him to pass to his rest soon after. February 19, 1962, he breathed his last. On the first of March the General Conference Committee voted to revoke their former action of suspending his credentials. He was to be listed in the denominational yearbook once more.¹⁸

Events of the 1960s and 1970s Within Adventism

Direct contact between Walter Martin and the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not been continuous. The publication of *The Truth About Seventh-*

day Adventism in 1960 was followed by nearly two decades of relative silence, punctuated only by the publication of Martin's *The Kingdom of the Cults* in 1965. In this second book he included Adventists, not as a cult, but as much misunderstood and maligned Christians. He would readily admit that they were perhaps immature in their theology, holding to concepts and teachings which he considered absurd, but he took pains to say that the leaders of the denomination had testified that they were in basic harmony with the Evangelical world in what he considered the important points of Christian faith, and thus they should be considered brothers in Christ.

Though our primary concern here is the interaction between Mr. Martin and the Adventist Church, it is unrealistic to completely ignore the developments of twenty years in order to follow only the major line of our story. For the truth of the matter is that the developments of the 1960s and 1970s would have been inconceivable were it not for the earlier influence of Walter Martin. With this in mind, then, we will first take a whirlwind tour of events and happenings with which Walter Martin had no personal involvement, so far as we know."

Robert D. Brinsmead

The 1960s saw the church much distracted by the "Brinsmead agitation," more formally known as the Sanctuary Awakening Fellowship. Frustrated with weak and superficial explanations of the saints' preparation to stand before God without a mediator, Robert Brinsmead set forth his belief that perfection of character was unattainable at the present time (due to the influence of "original sin"—a subject we shall hear more of shortly), but that such perfection was nonetheless a requirement for translation. In Brinsmead's thought, this lack was to be supplied through the grace of God in the closing act of Christ's high priestly ministry, the final atonement.

This movement attracted many church members, and confused many others. A major contribution to this confusion was that the efforts of those who sought to discredit Brinsmead's teachings were themselves self-contradictory and mutually exclusive. It was argued that Brinsmead put off character perfection until it was too late; and again it was argued that Brinsmead taught perfection too early. Some said that if any had failed of reaching perfection by the time of the final atonement their case was hopeless. Others said that, final atonement or no final atonement, there would be no character perfection this side of glorification. Even those outside Adventist circles have been perplexed as to how the church survived such conflicting viewpoints.²⁰

Once the dust had settled, it appeared that the (more or less) official position of the church was that there was no possibility of believers reaching a state of sinlessness before the Second Advent. Advocated first by Edward Heppenstall in the late 1960s, this belief was the united position of men such as Raymond Cottrell, Harry Lowe, E. W. Vick, L. C. Naden, Norval F. Pease, Hans K. LaRondelle, Taylor G. Bunch, Ralph S. Watts, and Desmond Ford.²¹

It would be unfair to say that these men favored disobedience, while the Awakening group favored obedience. All were wrestling with an as yet largely unrecognized interjection into Adventist thought. Brought to the church's attention for the first time by Robert Brinsmead, and later adopted and adapted by the Awakening movement's foes, the theological concept of original sin was making itself felt.

Perhaps the greatest irony of the period was that *both* the General Conference and Robert Brinsmead abandoned their early-1960s positions on the subject of perfection (the General Conference Defense Literature Committee and many representative authors of the day had stood for perfection before the close of probation; Brinsmead had advocated perfection at the time of the final atonement). The concepts first used by Heppenstall to combat the Awakening were eventually persuasive enough that Brinsmead and the majority of his followers capitulated in the early 1970s.

Choosing to retain his concepts of original sin and cut loose from the restraining influence of the Adventist Church as a body, Brinsmead at last carried his new-found theories to their logical conclusion, thus discarding his belief in victory over sin, the perfecting of the final generation, and—harking back to *Questions on Doctrine*—the post-Fall nature of Christ. It would only be a matter of years before the other great concern of the late 1950s—that of the atonement and the sanctuary doctrine—would also be rejected.²² Sabbath observance would come in for criticism by 1981.²³

During the years when Brinsmead flashed his way across the Adventist horizon, others chose to proceed in less spectacular style. As has been said, by the late 1960s the prevailing view of the church seemed to be quite solidly settled into the no-perfection-short-of-glorification position. This view was, of course, logically built on the pre-Fall nature-of-Christ concept found in *Questions on Doctrine*. Combined with the traditional Evangelical teaching of the completed atonement, this concept made the theological landscape of our church quite acceptable to those who were looking on from the outside.

Movement of Destiny

One might suspect that if no sudden moves had been made, the dubious teachings left after the Brinsmead battles could well have become the universally accepted status quo. But it was not to be. In what has been interpreted as an effort to solidify the positions taken by *Questions on Doctrine*, L. E. Froom's *Movement of Destiny* was published in 1971. This volume generated as much or more concern than had *Questions on Doctrine*, and for a very simple reason—its pages contained what could easily be classed as some of the most careless, or some of the most dishonest, "research" that had ever found its way through a Seventh-day Adventist press.

Perhaps the most glaring of the examples which might be cited is found on page 497. Under the heading, "Took Sinless Nature of Adam Before Fall," Dr. Froom arranged nineteen statements containing his supporting evidence. Each statement incorporates one or more excerpts from the writings

of Ellen G. White. None of these support his position; several—when provided with their original context—explicitly contradict what they are supposed to be supporting.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth of these nineteen selections from Ellen White are drawn from the same original source, and may now be found in *Selected Messages*, book 1,252-256. It is with considerable perplexity, then, that we find that the passage from which these quotations are drawn begins with the words, "In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition...."²⁴ How such evidence could be presented under the heading "Took Sinless Nature of Adam Before Fall" has defied the imagination of all who have become aware of the matter.

Resurgence of Discussion

Perhaps it was this new volume which sparked into action the dormant voices of protest within the church. In any event, the early 1970s marked a noticeable change in this regard.²⁵ Two of the editors of the *Review and Herald* led the way. Thomas A. Davis wrote first in *Romans for the Everyday Man*. Broaching the subject while discussing Romans 8:3 ("God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh"), he simply quoted with approval Ellen White's clear statement that "like every child of Adam He [Christ] accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity."²⁶

Herbert E. Douglass was the second voice to be heard. Writing in the editorial column of the *Review*, he asserted that Christ "undertook the cause of man, and with the same facilities that man may obtain, withstood the temptations of Satan as man must withstand them."²⁷

For three successive weeks in late 1971 and early 1972, Douglass expounded his topic, becoming more clear and forcible—and employing a greater number and more direct selections from the Spirit of Prophecy—each time. For three more years Douglass followed this pattern of stressing the reality of Christ's humanity at the time of the Christmas holidays. When asked what motivated him to do so, Douglass wrote: "Obviously it became a rallying point or flag for many who thought they never again would see the truth in print.... I simply wanted to give warm support to a point of view that had been very prominent in the history of our church and was still prominent in the lives and thinking of many of the General Conference brethren with whom I fellowshipped from day to day."²⁸

With the topic of the nature of Christ is closely linked the question of character perfection. The reason is simple: if Christ came with a fallen nature and no advantage which man may not enjoy, it is logical to accept at face value the Bible's call for holy living. If, on the other hand, He enjoyed the very considerable advantage of an unfallen nature, then it is difficult, if not entirely unreasonable, to expect fallen man to overcome sin as He did. When the nature of Christ came into focus once again in the early 1970s, it was, therefore, quite natural to also address the questions of sanctification and character

perfection. This the editors of the *Review and Herald* set out to do in a special issue (May 16, 1974) devoted to righteousness by faith.

Authors such as C. Mervyn Maxwell, Don Neufeld, George Vandeman, Herbert Douglass, and Kenneth Wood stood unitedly on the platform that righteousness by faith meant, in the final analysis, victory over sin in the life. There was, as might easily be imagined, some consternation over the promulgation of such views. Those who supported *Questions on Doctrine* and *Movement of Destiny* were placed in a difficult position in attempting to harmonize the teachings of these two volumes with what was, in the early 1970s, being taught by the *Review*. It would seem that, once again, a major theological shift had taken place. But all was still quite peaceful. Soon this situation, too, was to change.

Desmond Ford

In 1975 Gillian Ford issued a paper entitled "The Soteriological Implications of the Human Nature of Christ." Though published under her name, it was obvious to all that the views she set forth were identical to those of her husband, Desmond, a prominent professor at Avondale College in Australia. Three major issues were addressed and positions were taken on each: the doctrine of the fallen human nature of Christ was totally repudiated; righteousness by faith was defined as justification *alone* (meaning that one's sanctification had nothing to do whatsoever with his salvation); and the concept of character perfection in this earthly life was declared to be complete heresy. If nothing else, the paper made it clear that matters were coming to a head.

In early February 1976 the positions of Dr. Ford were examined before a large conference of Australian church leaders. J. W. Kent and E. A. Basham took the lead in expressing their concerns that Dr. Ford's positions were irreconcilably opposed to the teaching of the church. Such a charge seems to have been no surprise to Ford. Apparently this conference settled nothing, and a second conference to consider these matters was appointed for April 1976, to be held in Palmdale, California. The Palmdale conference produced a statement intended to clarify the issues. In reality, it clarified nothing. Still, Dr. Ford returned to his homeland proclaiming that it was "a wonderful thing" that the statement supported his belief that righteousness by faith included nothing more than forensic (legal) justification.

Others, however, saw the statement differently. Kenneth Wood, editor of the *Review and Herald*, and Robert H. Pierson, president of the General Conference, both provided church members with a report of the conference through the pages of the *Review and Herald*. When the actual wording of the Palmdale statement was made available, rather than the erroneous versions first reported in Australia, it was apparent that the statement did not provide Ford with the unqualified support he had wished. It was, after all, an addition to, rather than a resolution of, the confusion which already existed.

On the question of the nature of Christ, Palmdale did little to settle anything. After describing both the pre-Fall and post-Fall positions, the report of

the conference given in the *Review* indicated that "whichever of these views Christians may hold of Christ's humanity, we believe that the central concept is to recognize Jesus as the Saviour of all mankind, and that through His victorious life, lived in human flesh, He provides the link between divinity and humanity."²⁹

Here was a clear statement that this point of truth was considered a non-essential. Church members were free to choose between two mutually exclusive views leading to vastly different conclusions (though this may not have been clearly recognized by all at the time), and still be held in good and regular standing. While it should ever be borne in mind that all men everywhere are always to be left free to choose in spiritual matters, it is indeed unfortunate that the historic stance of Adventism—and particularly of the Spirit of Prophecy—on this topic was so little understood and appreciated. We can only wonder what might have been the result if Ralph Larson's exhaustive study of Adventist Christology (*The Word Was Made Flesh*) had been completed ten years earlier, and thus able to exert its influence at the time when it was perhaps most needed.

Opposition to Sabbath School Lessons

The second quarter of 1977 (April through June) featured a *Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* written by Herbert Douglass. Entitled "Jesus the Model Man," the series of lessons dealt with such topics as the human nature of Christ, Christ as our Example in overcoming sin, and the perfection of the final generation. Whereas an occasional magazine article could be overlooked by those opposed to its viewpoint, thirteen weeks of daily lessons proved too bitter a pill to swallow. There was soon strong and vocal opposition to the use of the materials prepared. One concerned protester wrote that opposition to these teachings was, "extremely widespread among ministers throughout the church, and it appears that it will continue to grow if the men in Washington do not admit their mistake."³⁰

Geoffrey J. Paxton

In August, a new publication entered the arena of discussion. Oddly enough, the author was one Geoffrey J. Paxton, an Anglican minister from Australia who professed great interest in the fate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. *The Shaking of Adventism* claimed to be a friendly evaluation of the church's assertion that it is the continuation of the Reformation. Paxton, however, fell prey to the almost universal idolatry of mankind. Instead of seeing a continuation of the progress of the Reformation, he measured everything according to his concept of a fixed form of the Reformation. Obviously, any advanced understanding beyond that of Luther, and Paxton's own hand-picked selection of "Reformation scholars," would appear as confusion or heresy.

As evident as this bias was, however, it did not prevent him from drawing large crowds of Adventists as he traveled across the United States call-

ing on the conservative leadership of the denomination to repent of their "Roman Catholic" theology, and extolling the views of Desmond Ford and Robert Brinsmead. It is of interest that, although Paxton certainly had no appreciation whatever for the Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary, he scrupulously avoided it in his discourses. As close as he was to Dr. Ford, one can only surmise that he was being kind enough not to proclaim the latter's beliefs prematurely.

On the Sabbath, October 27, 1979, Dr. Ford at last put into place the final piece of the *Questions on Doctrine* puzzle. For reasons best known only to himself, he chose that day to publicly admit that he had not believed the Adventist doctrine of the sanctuary for more than thirty years. Clearly his concept of the inspiration of Ellen White was placed in question as well. The obvious implications of such a statement he was willing to accept and defend. He was, at any rate, a logical man. Having accepted false premises, he was at least logical enough to carry them through to their final conclusions.

That day was a turning point for many. Some hailed Ford's announcement with joy. Others started back in shock and surprise. Still others were saddened to find that their uneasiness with the gifted preacher from down under was more than founded. For all, it was a day of decision. What would *they* believe?

It was in such a setting that Walter Martin would renew his contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Seeking Clarification

It was now January of 1980. Word of Dr. Ford's sudden and largely unexpected denial of Adventist doctrine had worked its way north, crossing the international border at the forty-ninth parallel. Now it rested on the heart and mind of a Bible teacher at Okanagan Adventist Academy in Kelowna, British Columbia. Tracing the problem to its roots, he determined to know the truth about what his church and its leaders believed. And central to the issue was an understanding of the conferences of twenty-five years before.

Writing to Walter Martin, he said, "It sometimes becomes rather hard to determine just where we stand as a denomination. Are we divided?"

"I would appreciate anything you might have from your files that could help clear up this issue in my mind once and for all."³¹

Nearly a year would pass before a reply came back. Apologizing for his tardiness on account of a "horrendous" schedule, Dr. Martin sharply criticized those within Adventism who were drawing back from *Questions on Doctrine*. That he had been watching Adventism closely is obvious. And the attitude of some then in positions of responsibility, he said, was such that it would "further what is now a growing schism within the Seventh-day Adventist denomination."

As to Adventist doctrinal positions, he was clear: "One cannot simply have his cake and eat it too. Either the Seventh-day Adventist denomination stood behind the book *Questions on Doctrine*, or they printed it under false pretenses. I do not accept the latter; and all the evidence is in favor of the former. You

may consult Dr. [Roy Allan] Anderson if you wish. He is an honorable man with a good memory; and if we have to get down to the area of factual data," those who were seeking to moderate the stance of *Questions on Doctrine* "will not be very successful in defending this double talk.""

Martin's Mid-1980s Assessment of Adventism

It should be borne in mind that Walter Martin, by this time, was an even greater force to be reckoned with than in the 1950s. As founder and president of the Christian Research Institute, in addition to being the principal speaker on the "Bible Answer Man" radio broadcast, Walter Martin was no lightweight in contemporary Christianity. What he wrote, what he said each day over the radio to an audience of from two to three million, carried a great deal of influence.

Although it was often rumored that Dr. Martin would return actively to the fray going on within Adventism in the early 1980s, we see relatively little of him. It is possible that his influence was all the greater for having been held so much in reserve. In April 1985 the thirty-sixth edition of Martin's classic work, *The Kingdom of the Cults*, came off the presses. Newly revised and expanded, the 544-page volume contained a 92-page appendix on Seventh-day Adventism (nearly a sixth of the book and four more pages than were devoted to the second most lengthy section—that on the Jehovah's Witnesses). Though somewhat tempered with a mixture of caution and threat, Martin would still speak of Adventists as Christians rather than cultists:

"I must, for the time being, stand behind my original evaluation of Seventh-day Adventism as presented comprehensively in my first book on the subject and later in this volume. Only events not yet unfolded, but within the knowledge of the Lord Himself, will determine whether my evaluation will need to be revised in the future. It is my prayer that the aberrational currents within contemporary Adventism will not prevail and that Adventism will continue to be a Christian and Evangelical, albeit unique, Christian denomination.""

Again, we see that Dr. Martin had not lost his interest in following events within our church:

"During the last ten years (since the early 1970s) the Seventh-day Adventist denomination has seen turbulence, both administratively and doctrinally, that is more extensive than any turmoil in the organization's history. Administratively, there have been a number of Adventist leaders and pastors who have been removed from their positions because of supposed or proven improper financial activities, including misappropriation of funds. On the United States government level, the Internal Revenue Service, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Justice Department have all initiated investigations and some Seventh-day Adventist Conference administrators may even face trial for fraud. Doctrinally, the church has developed a large rift between those members and leaders who are solidly within the Evangelical Christian camp and those members and leaders who, because

of their emphasis on works-righteousness, legalism, and the prophetic status accorded to founder Ellen G. White, may well move the denomination over time outside of the Evangelical camp and perhaps even into actual cultism."³⁴

Wishing to extract a "public and official statement reaffirming or denying the authority of the Adventist book, *Questions on Doctrine*," Martin wrote to the General Conference in February of 1983. "On April 29, 1983, W. Richard Leshner, vice-president of the General Conference, responded in a personal letter. His reply read, in part:

" 'You ask first if Seventh-day Adventists still stand behind the answers given to your questions in *Questions on Doctrine*, as they did in 1957. The answer is yes. You have noted in your letter that some opposed the answers given then, and, to some extent, the same situation exists today. But certainly the great majority of Seventh-day Adventists are in harmony with the views expressed in *Questions on Doctrine*.' "³⁵

On the basis of such assurance, Walter Martin proclaimed once again to the world that Adventists were—for the time being, at least—Christians.

In the course of his lengthy discussion of Adventism, Martin finds occasion to deal once again with the question of the atonement. Dismissing the charge of an incomplete-atonement theory, he asserts that Adventists now believe that the atonement was in fact completed on the cross. Thus we are informed that the concept taught for more than a century by Seventh-day Adventists—that a work of atonement is going on now in the heavenly sanctuary—"has been repudiated by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination."³⁶

In fact, he asserts this concept is demonstrable from the writings of "no less an Adventist than Ellen G. White, writing in the *Review and Herald*, September 21, 1901." He then quotes as follows:

"Christ planted the cross between heaven and earth and when the Father beheld the sacrifice of His Son, He bowed before it in recognition of His perfection. 'It is enough,' He said. 'The atonement is completed.' "³⁷ It should be noted, however, that this quotation is actually found in the *Review and Herald* of September 24, 1901, and that in the original the last word quoted is "complete," rather than "completed," as given by Martin.

The "John Ankerberg Show"

Shortly after the latest edition of Martin's book came off the presses, we find him appearing on the "John Ankerberg Show," a popular Evangelical television talk show. Ankerberg's second guest on the program was none other than William Johnsson, editor of the *Adventist Review*.

Although the interview (some would say "debate") aired as a five-part series, it was actually filmed on a single occasion. Seated on stage were William Johnsson and Walter Martin; John Ankerberg roamed through the audience with his microphone, occasionally interjecting comments and guiding the dialogue.

Ankerberg began with a discussion of *Questions on Doctrine*, and noted that there had been some opposition raised against the volume. Johnsson acknow-

ledged that M. L. Andreasen had taken exception to the book's positions on the nature of Christ and the atonement, but was unhesitating in his confidence that "the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not repudiated *Questions on Doctrine*." To support his contention, he merely needed to point out that the book had gone through eight printings and now had more than 150,000 copies in print.

By far the greatest portion of the discussion centered on the role of Ellen White: Was she considered an "infallible interpreter of Scripture," or were Adventists at liberty to set aside any portion of her counsels that they might choose? To complicate matters, Martin claimed that Ellen White had, early in her ministry, denied the full deity of Christ—only to reverse herself later on. Johnsson protested that he had never heard of such a quotation, but the stage had already been set.³⁸

Martin had constructed an artificially distorted dilemma; nevertheless Johnsson was on the spot for an answer. Seizing the initiative, he responded: "I'll give you my answer She is not an infallible interpreter of Scripture."

It was an old debater's trick, and one that works too well, too often. Ask a distorted question and then insist on an unqualified answer. It is inevitable that any answer which does not first address the weakness of the question will itself partake of that weakness.

Attention shifted occasionally to the sanctuary doctrine. Martin, as one would expect, found fault with the Adventist understanding of the book of Hebrews and the investigative judgment. As Johnsson spoke up in defense of these truths, Martin was quick to interject the assertion that whatever this judgment might be, it certainly could not in any way affect the believer's salvation. John Ankerberg joined in, saying that the judgment was only "for reward." Naturally, such an idea immediately does away with the importance of the judgment. ("It may have something to do with how many stars you have in your crown, or how many rooms you have in your mansion, but you're going to get to heaven anyway, so what difference does it make?")

Under pressure on this point from both his host and fellow guest, Elder Johnsson at last pacified them by saying, "Well, I don't believe that the judgment is for our salvation, not at all." Such an admission having been extracted, it was time to move the discussion on to other points. Soon Ankerberg and Martin joined together to express their concern that Elder Johnsson might be relieved of his position for having spoken against Ellen White. Des Ford was fired, (following the August 1980 review of his positions) they reasoned, maybe you will be too.

A short segment was devoted to questions from the audience. Of particular concern was the following question from one who identified himself as an Adventist minister:

"I wonder if Dr. Johnsson can tell us what practical Christian application is there for me as a Christian from the 1844 message? It brings us in disgrace and misunderstanding with the Christian world and our Evangelical Christians.

Why didn't we just drop the thing? What value is it? As a minister I've never been able to find a single item of Christian value in that doctrine."

Naturally, such an attack played well to the television audience. But it may also serve to challenge us as a people to come to grips with the fact that only a small percentage of our membership have anything more than vague concepts of the sanctuary and its meaning. This area has been largely ignored since the days when Robert Brinsmead urged its study. In light of the importance this doctrine is to play in the closing scenes of the great controversy, such ignorance and neglect are inexcusable. If anything, this branch of truth needs more attention, not less.

In closing, Ankerberg asked Martin if Adventism was nearing the status of a full-fledged "cult." The answer, suitably discreet, was predictable: not yet, but getting close. With assurances of the Evangelicals' love and concern, the series came to its close.

"From Controversy to Crisis"

A little more than three years later, the summer of 1988 saw the publication of "From Controversy to Crisis: An Updated Assessment of Seventh-day Adventism," a six-page article which appeared in the *Christian Research Journal*, the official publication of Martin's Christian Research Institute. Although written by Ken Samples, a researcher at the institute, the article is clearly a continuation of the evaluation process begun by Walter Martin more than thirty years before. Samples traced the history of the Adventist/Evangelical dialogue from 1955 onward. The story of the conferences and the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* is accurate, except for the bias which shows at times against the doctrinal positions of historic Adventism. Moving through the stream of time, Samples builds his case that there are now, in fact, two distinct varieties of Adventism: "While *Questions on Doctrine* is considered to be the origin of Evangelical Adventism, it also fueled the fire for those who supported Traditional Adventism. Following its publication, M. L. Andreasen, a respected Adventist scholar, severely criticized *Questions on Doctrine*, stating that in his opinion it had sold Adventism down the river to the Evangelicals. Several years later, under Robert Pierson's administration, two prominent scholars, Kenneth Wood and Herbert Douglass, declared that the publishing of *Questions on Doctrine* had been a major mistake."³⁹

Needless to say, Samples and Martin felt far more comfortable with "Evangelical" than they did with "Traditional" Adventism. Especially troubling to them was the removing of the ministerial credentials of Desmond Ford, whom they styled "a careful and prolific scholar." The article expresses concern over confused signals from the denomination, and comes to the obvious conclusion which many within the denomination still deny: "While the decisions of the General Conference seem to convey their support of Traditional Adventism, the denomination has denied that it actively sought to eliminate all Evangelical influences [through the firing or forced resignation of denominational workers]. Many former Adventist pastors and Bible teachers would

vigorously contest this statement. *It would appear that there are still large numbers of Adventists who are of Evangelical persuasion, but certainly not as vocal after Glacier View [the conference which denied Ford's allegations].*"⁴⁰

As a closing note it was asserted that "with respect to the charge that Traditional Adventism is a non-Christian cult,...it would appear that [it] is at least aberrant, confusing, or compromising Biblical truth (e.g., their view of justification, the nature of Christ, appealing to an unBiblical authority). It must also be stated that if the traditional camp continues in its departure from *Questions on Doctrine*, and in promoting Ellen White as the church's infallible interpreter, then they could one day be fully deserving of the title 'cult,' as some Adventists recognize."⁴¹

Following the publication of this article there remained only one significant opportunity for dialogue between Adventists and Walter Martin. Two meetings held in the Campus Hill Church of Loma Linda gave us, on the twenty-sixth of January, 1989, this final opportunity. Fittingly, perhaps, this last such occasion was without doubt the most informative.

The Campus Hill Meetings

Pastors Dave Vandenburg and Larry Christoffel of the Loma Linda Campus Hill Church had been considering the possibility of a church seminar on cults, and especially the "new-age" cults which seem to have found haven to a large extent in California. In the process, it occurred to them that they might learn something from the acknowledged authority of the Evangelical world on the subject. And so it was that they found themselves journeying to San Juan Capistrano to meet Walter Martin.

As Pastor Christoffel noted, however, "When we were actually in Dr. Martin's office, we spent a lot of time talking about Seventh-day Adventism."⁴² Vandenburg explained: "As we talked, we got to talking about Adventism, and about where it's headed, where it's coming from, where it is now, and we found that Ken [Samples] was about to do a major article in the *Christian Research Journal* on Seventh-day Adventists. It was, as he told us, going to be a kind of reassessment of Seventh-day Adventism, in the light of things that had taken place since the publication [of *Questions on Doctrine*], since the discussions that took place between Drs. Martin, Barnhouse, and the General Conference."⁴³

When "From Controversy to Crisis" was published in the summer of 1988, its appearance sparked an interest in the minds of the two Adventist pastors. Christoffel explains: "We were wondering if it was possible to get a response to the article. So, initially there was a contact made with the [Loma Linda University] School of Religion, to see if there was an interest in a response. We also contacted the Conference president to make sure that they understood what we were doing. And it was finally determined that Campus Hill would have two meetings [with Dr Martin and his associate, Ken Samples], one in which they would invite the pastors [from Adventist Churches in the surrounding area] for an interchange [in the morning], and another one in the afternoon [for

the faculty of the School of Religion]."" It is through these meetings that we gain our last, and clearest, glimpse of Adventism and Walter Martin.

Historical Review by Walter Martin

At the beginning of each of these two meetings Dr. Martin was given the floor to make introductory remarks. As might have been expected, he traced his involvement with Adventists from the time of the mid-1950s. Much of this history we have already examined, but some of what Martin had to say adds a great deal to our picture of his understanding of Adventism.

"When we got to the time of publication, it was agreed that my book, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*, which they had read, and their book, *Questions on Doctrine*, would be equally distributed in Seventh-day Adventist bookstores. When the time came for the publication of my book, the General Conference reneged, and they did not do what they said they would do. It brought Froom and Read and Unruh and Anderson to us with sincere apologies for the fact that they felt they had represented what the General Conference was now not willing to do. As a result of that, we took all the shots from the critics, on both sides of the fence, and the General Conference took none of them."⁴⁵

"I laugh today when I read some Adventist publications, or aberrant Adventist publications; [which] say that I twisted the arm of R. A. Anderson, L. E. Froom, W E. Read, and T E. Unruh and that my forceful, dynamic personality backed them into a corner and somehow or other whipped these poor old men into shape and got them to sell Adventism out to Evangelicalism. Read my lips—Tpsht!* That's pure garbage. And you have a rare opportunity today. You're looking at the only surviving eyewitness. I was there. I heard what they said. I took copious notes. I wrote a book on it, and I'm reissuing that book, *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*. I've got four publishers standing in line for it, so there's great interest in what we're going to be saying."⁴⁶

"The greatest joy in my life in Adventism and my dialogues with them was to be in the city of Jerusalem with Roy A. Anderson in 1970 and to see Roy Anderson serve communion to men who wouldn't even look in his direction twenty years before, and who are calling him beloved brother, and hugging him, and introducing him as the man who is the head of Seventh-day Adventist ministers throughout the world, a brother in Christ.

"That was worth everything. I'd do it all over again just for that glorious moment."⁴⁷

We see in these meetings a most interesting picture. That Dr. Martin was possessed of a quick mind is obvious. That he was fully aware that there were no other "eyewitnesses" yet living who might contradict his testimony is also clear. He had certainly not overlooked his influence and the influence of his writings, and it would seem that he wasn't particularly bashful about reminding others of these facts. And with all of this he combined an often-expressed

* "Tpsht" is the effort of the transcriber to record Dr. Martin's expression of disgust. The video tape of the meeting reveals that Martin extended his tongue slightly between his lips and blew.

concern and love for Adventists, most particularly those who might be classed as Evangelical Adventists.

Questions and Answers

Following the introductory remarks at the first meeting, the area pastors in attendance were given opportunity to submit written questions. A number of these—and the responses given by Dr. Martin and his associate, Ken Samples—are very interesting.

Question: "Why don't you classify Roman Catholicism as a cult since they (a) do not believe in righteousness by faith alone; (b) have an infallible interpreter of Scripture, which is to say the church, or the pope; (c) [require] confession to humans rather than God alone; and (d) [teach] many other heretical doctrines?"

Martin: "Well, I have classified Roman Catholicism as an apostate church. I was educated by them. I graduated from their schools. It has apostatized in specific areas, and is erroneous in some of the things you are talking about right there. Yes. But it's not classified as a cult because it affirms the basic doctrines of Biblical theology and you can be saved as a Roman Catholic, not as a Jehovah's Witness, not as a Mormon, not as a Mind Scientist, or a New Ager."

Samples: "I think the problem with Roman Catholicism essentially is that they are not so much heretical in structure, as in effect. If you look at the structure, if you look at the creeds, they're orthodox, both by our standards and yours."

Martin: "Ken is a former Roman Catholic, so he speaks with a degree of insight and knowledge."⁴⁸

Question: "The perception is by some, that *Questions on Doctrine* represents a major theological shift which was made by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the 1950s, a shift which many people would like to repudiate. And the understanding of others is that *Questions on Doctrine* simply reflected a clarification of that which Seventh-day Adventists had always said, and a ruling out of those things that Seventh-day Adventists did not want to be labeled with. So what was it? Was it a major theological shift that took place in the 1950s and in which certain things were given away, or was it, instead, a clarification of things that Seventh-day Adventists have been saying all along?"

Martin: "The people I dealt with maintained that it was a clarification, that their position could be defended from Adventist writings, and they vigorously maintained that they were not changing anything which they thought was basic to the Adventist message. I think they did, however, admit—and I can recall the day it happened, when Dr. Murdoch and Dr. Heppenstall were present, and the question came up.) They had brought them in because we were exegeting [interpreting the Biblical passages] on the sanctuary doctrine, the holy place, the Most Holy Place, and so forth in the [book of] Hebrews. And George Cannon accompanied me on these

[occasions]. He's professor of Greek at Bethel Seminary. He was then professor of Greek and Theology at Nyack Missionary College and has a doctorate from Union Seminary in Greek, and is a brilliant scholar. And George, I remember, went head-to-head with Dr. Heppenstall and Dr. Murdoch with the Greek New Testament there, and they went line upon line through the text, and as they got to the crucial point there, everybody was listening carefully to what they said. Cannon looked at them and said, 'There is just no sense debating the issue any further. The text is cleat At His resurrection, Jesus Christ entered into the Second Apartment of the sanctuary, into the Holiest of all, with His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. This could not, did not, take place in 1844.'

'And the gentlemen looked very long and hard, and Cannon said, 'The text says He went into the Second Apartment, didn't He?' And Dr. Heppenstall said, 'Yes, into the Second Apartment, into the Holiest of all, with His own blood at the resurrection. The text says so.'

"Murdoch said the same thing. Now, you can read Desmond Ford on this in great detail. He's probably one of your most articulate, and surely one of your most brilliant men I've met on Adventism and on general theology. I think you'll find that he's done a very commendable job of exegeting this as well, but that was admitted at that time [in the 1950s]....

"Now if you read *Questions on Doctrine* on this, they went very clearly and in depth to explain what Jesus did from their perspective of clarification. Now, I don't really care whether you say, 'clarify' or 'reverse field,' the important thing is, you get back to what the text says. The ultimate point of contention is 'what does the text say?' Not what somebody says the text says. I had enough of that in Romanism. I had enough of it in my upbringing of the Church. I don't care what somebody says the text says. That's why I learned the language to find out what the text says. And I know what it says. And it says it didn't happen in 1844. No way, Jose! You can believe it if you want to, but it ain't there. Now that's clarification, or reversal, but it sure is truth."⁴⁹

From dialogue of this sort it must be obvious that any believer in historic Adventist truth listening to such a presentation must have found it extremely difficult to hold his peace. Still, there seems to have been no distracting remonstrances on the part of the ministerial audience. Again, it should be pointed out that this account was given in the full knowledge that there were no "eyewitnesses" present to contradict it. Nonetheless, let us consider a few more of the ministers' questions and Dr. Martin's responses.

Question: "How does a church change? Des Ford is still preaching, but without credentials. Many feel that he accurately states the issues. Is it enough for us to (a) preach the truth ourselves, and (b) wait for more funerals, since younger Seventh-day Adventist preachers tend more toward the Evangelical positions, or should [we] do something more?"

Martin: "You're in between a rock and the hard place if you're an Adventist and you get pushed up against the wall in relation to Mrs. White and some of the hard line views which have been taken. You have your credentials, you

have your church, you have your teaching ministry, wherever it may be, or whatever your function is, and the temptation is to stay within the fold of the church and work for change within the church. That philosophy has been going on now since 1957 to 1960 when it first started out with *Questions on Doctrine* and *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism*, and it has managed to generate a considerable amount of controversy.

"However, there has to be, on the part of every individual, a moment of truth, a time for commitment one way or another, and that involves sometimes great loss from the perspective of time and space. I admire those Seventh-day Adventist ministers and those in positions of authority, and pastors, and teachers who have felt that in good conscience they couldn't accept some of the things which they previously believed and put the flag up on the pole for everybody to see, lovingly and forcefully, and I would say personally that that was the right decision to make, but I can't play Holy Spirit and conscience for everybody else. That would be my conviction on the subject. I think Ford did the right thing. I think that he was sort of like a modern-day Martin Luther."⁵⁰

Walter Martin's Evaluation of Ellen White

As might have been expected, Dr. Martin had a considerable amount to say about Ellen White. His position was an interesting one, though surprising from someone who relied so heavily on "logic." He freely admitted that Mrs. White did, on occasion at least, "have access to supernatural information" and that "the Lord did use her specifically to accomplish a certain thing" at certain times.⁵¹ At the same time, he found great fault with her writings, styled her a "female pope," and asserted that she was often mistaken and deluded in regard to her understanding of inspiration in her own life: "What we're talking about is a person who has the gift of prophecy at various times, but not all the time, and therefore [it was] perfectly possible for her to have made mistakes and exegetical errors."⁵² Much as in his book *The Kingdom of the Cults*, Martin referred to a great mass of "evidence" which he asserted demonstrated Ellen White's failings. But again we find that he presents nothing of any consequence for actual consideration—"Well, I don't have a suitcase of documents with me. Obviously I'm limited in that respect."⁵³

The other major topics of former years, the sanctuary and the investigative judgment, also came up in discussion. Ken Samples expressed concern over a perceived loss of "assurance" from which Adventists are presumed to suffer. This concern is easily understood when it is remembered that Mr. Samples describes himself as holding to "a moderate view within Calvinism." After a discussion of the "supralapsarian," "infralapsarian," and "double predestination" views of various Calvinists, Samples fortunately clarified his position by saying that, in his opinion, "a truly regenerated believer is not going to end up in reprobation."⁵⁴ In other words, he believes in the doctrine of once-saved-always-saved.

Though it was never explicitly said by either Martin or Samples, it is easy to see that the investigative judgment fits very poorly with this doctrine and its companion doctrine of predestination. Such is to be expected when discussing theology with Calvinists, whether they be moderate or not.

As always, though, one point of theology will affect others, and here is where the most serious problems arise. While addressing what he saw as the dangers of antinomianism, Dr. Martin shared the following insight into his thinking: "Do we invalidate the truth of the law by faith? No, we establish the truth of the law. The only horrible part about it is, you can't keep it."⁵⁵ We might wish he had added, "in your own strength," but the sad fact is that those who hold to Calvinistic beliefs deny the power of the Lord to keep the believer from falling. To them, the Christian life presents no hope of victory over sin at any point this side of translation.

Ellen White, of course, disagrees: "Satan declared that it was impossible for the sons and daughters of Adam to keep the law of God, and thus charged upon God a lack of wisdom and love. If they could not keep the law, then there was fault with the Lawgiver. Men who are under the control of Satan repeat these accusations against God, in asserting that men cannot keep the law of God. Jesus humbled Himself, clothing His divinity with humanity, in order that He might stand as the head and representative of the human family, and by both precept and example condemn sin in the flesh, and give the lie to Satan's charges."⁵⁶

It is this issue which makes Calvinism such a dangerous teaching, for the preconceptions of Calvinistic thought blind the mind to the very heart of Christ's purpose in coming to earth.

All in all, it was an interesting day, an opportunity to learn something of the man who seemed to know so much about us for so long. It seems hard to understand how a man could spend thirty-five years observing God's remnant church as closely as Walter Martin did, and yet fail to find in its message anything which would draw him to it. Perhaps, at last, we can begin to see something of the cause. Sadly, though, it seems that any understanding we might have gained has come much too late. Too late for the benefit of those who represented the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the 1950s. And too late for Dr. Martin as well.

Death of Walter Martin

The meetings in Loma Linda were the last opportunity we had to present the distinctive truths of Adventism to Walter Martin. Five months later, on the twenty-sixth of June, 1989, he suffered a sudden heart attack, and so closed his earthly pilgrimage. Thus ended the long story of Adventism and Walter Martin.

Much might be said in retrospect. The lessons to be learned are many. Of all that might be said, perhaps two statements—one by Walter Martin and one by Ellen White—most deserve our thought.

"What we're facing in Adventism is a widening gap which no amount of sweeping under the rug will cure, and that eventually, if not while we are

alive, as sure as you're breathing the air in the room now, will eventually cause more problems than Adventism can ever possibly deal with."⁵⁷

"I am determined that our only safety is in being joined to the Lord Jesus Christ. We can afford to lose the friendship of worldly men."⁵⁸

Adventist Self-assessment

It is natural that, at some point, every person stop and ask himself, "Could it be that I am wrong?" As Seventh-day Adventists, we, too, must ask ourselves whether our understandings of truth are correct. Certain it is that error will never be an asset, and if someone else—indeed, anyone else—can show us a clearer understanding of truth, we would be foolish to reject it.

Readers of this book may wonder if the charges leveled against the Seventh-day Adventist Church by Walter Martin are sustainable. Although space here does not permit a complete review of all Dr. Martin's doctrinal positions, a summary of basic facts may be helpful to the reader.

Walter Martin, over the course of nearly thirty-four years, took exception to many points of historical Adventist teaching. These include: the seventh-day Sabbath, the mark of the beast, the state of the dead, the final annihilation of the wicked, the Second Coming, the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel chapter eight, the heavenly sanctuary, the investigative judgment, the atonement, the Spirit of Prophecy, the human nature of Christ, and the concept of the remnant church.

The objections which he gave to these points of doctrine were ones commonly cited by Protestant detractors of Adventism. These objections have been ably dealt with in many volumes presenting the historical Adventist teachings. What is of particular interest, however, is that Dr. Martin seems to have understood, more fully than many other detractors, the importance of *systematic* theology. It is a simple truth that only those doctrines which can be brought together into a consistent, unified whole will stand the test of time. Walter Martin understood this fact.

Despite his disagreement with so many Adventist doctrines, we find that—from the writing of his first book on the subject until the time of his last contact with Adventism—Dr. Martin was willing to overlook many "minor" points of difference. He was even willing to admit that Ellen White was inspired—on occasion, at least. On some points, however, he was unrelenting: 'Adventists may be a bit odd,' he seems to say, "but they are still Christians as long as they believe...."

Walter Martin's Criteria

But what was it that we must believe? In Dr. Martin's mind there were two essential doctrines: the finished atonement at the cross, and the sinless human nature of Christ. If only the Adventists would agree on these points, then they were "Christians" as far as Walter Martin was concerned.

It is of more than passing interest to contemplate the pivotal nature of these two points. Is it mere coincidence that the two issues deemed to be of utmost importance by Dr. Martin are two of the foundation stones upon

which the doctrines of Catholicism and Calvinism are built? While it is true that there remains yet one question more basic to any system of theological thought ("What is sin?"), the two issues emphasized by Dr. Martin are of crucial importance.

Belief in a finished atonement leads to the conclusion that the individual Christian is not able, of himself, to decide his own destiny. To the Catholic, Christ finished His priestly work of atonement at the cross, thus supplying a stockpile of merit which must be applied to the sinner's account by the intercession of earthly priests, Mary, and the Saints. To the Calvinist, Christ finished the atonement at the cross, thus placing the question of salvation beyond the influence of human decision. It is from this belief that the doctrine of predestination (and its first cousin, "once-saved-always-saved") is derived.

It takes no imagination to see that, no matter which branch of this theology one might choose, accepting the doctrine of an atonement finished at the cross will rule out the truth of Christ's high priestly ministry in heaven. Once that concession is made, other truths quickly erode. If there is no high priestly ministry in heaven, what possible need is there for a heavenly sanctuary? What merit would there be in cleansing a nonexistent sanctuary? What could be said for the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel? And what need would there be for a remnant church if it had no greater truth to proclaim or special mission to fulfill?

Indeed, for Walter Martin to require such a concession of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was nothing less than asking for unconditional surrender. But a finished atonement was only half of the package—what consequences might arise from the remainder?

The Human Nature of Christ

The question of the human nature of Christ is not a new one. It has for centuries been debated by advocates of any number of differing views. In recent years, this controversial history has often been cited as reason to avoid the subject, to ignore it in hopes that it will go away. (Oddly, however, those who are most vocal about avoiding open discussion of the issue, often seem to find frequent cause and opportunity to advocate *their* view of the subject.) While it is true that controversy is far from pleasant, it hardly seems to be sufficient reason to abandon the advocacy of Bible truth. Such a conclusion would spell doom for virtually every teaching of God's Word.

As any systematic theologian must, Walter Martin had settled on a view of the human nature of Christ compatible with the doctrines he advocated. It was this view which he considered so vital in his assessment of Adventism—indeed, concurrence on this point was one of his two non-negotiables. Unfortunately, the view which he encouraged us to accept is repeatedly specified by the apostle John as the identifying mark of the antichrist.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh

is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John 4:1-3

"Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." 2 John 7

Many will say that these verses have no bearing on the question, but they certainly do. "Flesh" (the Greek word is *mg*, pronounced *sarx*) is the same word used throughout the New Testament to designate the fallen nature of man. Note a few other uses of this word:

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:6

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Romans 7:18

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.... For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.... So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8:1, 3-6, 8-9

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21

'And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.'" 1 Timothy 3:16

The Meaning of Sarx

Every instance of the word flesh in these verses is a translation of the Greek word *sarx*. In Romans 8:6, *sarx* also appears, translated as the word "carnally." Now, it is also true that *sarx* sometimes refers to the physical body, the tangible flesh which we all have. But the question here is "Which mean-

ing of *sarx* did John have in mind when he wrote the warning about the teaching of antichrist?"

Remember, the warning is twofold: *Every* spirit that teaches that Christ came in the *sarx* is of God. *Every* spirit that denies that Christ came in the *sarx* is antichrist. There is no middle ground.

Have you ever met a professed Christian who taught that Jesus didn't have a real body? Do you know what the teaching of the Catholic church is on this point? The Catholic church (in common with all mainline Christian denominations) teaches that Christ had a real flesh and blood body. In Catholic doctrine, the body of Christ while He lived on earth was fully as physical as is yours or mine.

So what happened to the antichrist?

But when you look at the question of the *human nature* of Christ, the picture suddenly changes. And the reason is simple: If the devil had to admit that Christ overcame sin in the same fallen nature that you and I have, his whole case would be lost immediately.

Naturally, the antichrist would never foster belief in such a powerful truth as that. No, the idea must be carefully maintained that Christ's human nature had some advantage over ours. Catholic doctrine accomplishes this by belief in the "immaculate conception." Many people think this has to do with the conception of Jesus in Mary's womb, but the doctrine is actually talking about the conception of Mary in her mother's womb.

Apparently it was so important that Christ have that advantage over us, that the Catholic Church had to go back an extra generation to make sure that Mary was entirely free from original sin, just so there would be absolutely no question that Jesus did not come in the *sarx*. And that teaching, wherever it is found, in whatever form it is found, is the mark of the antichrist.

Confusion in Adventism

Unfortunately, the issue has not been clear, even in the minds of Adventists who should have known better. Ellen White writes: "Letters have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations."

But what was her answer? "If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our Example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been.... It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature."⁵⁹

All of this digression, as interesting as it may be, has been to point out the importance of the two requirements Walter Martin was presenting to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And yet, for some, questions may remain. Dr. Martin said that Ellen White denied the deity of Christ. Did she really? Dr. Martin said we were wrong in our understanding of the book of Hebrews. Are we really?

These are good questions. Are there good answers? Unfortunately, not as good as we might wish. But the fault lies entirely with the questions themselves. Dr. Martin never produced the evidence for either of these accusations, and it is very hard to refute a charge which is that vague. Dr. Martin never showed us where it was that he thought Ellen White denied the deity of Christ. And in his comments about the book of Hebrews that were quoted earlier, he never even mentioned which chapter of the book he was talking about.

Can we prove him wrong? Of course, but it requires a full analysis of the book of Hebrews and the entire body of Ellen White's writings.

Do we have any good reason to believe he is right? No.

But a strong assertion which offers no evidence and proves nothing is often more difficult to counteract than an argument which tries to prove a point and fails. Perhaps DE Martin knew that.

1. Kenneth R. Samples, "From Controversy to Crisis: An Updated Assessment of Seventh-day Adventism," *Christian Research Journal*, Summer 1988
2. T E. Unruh, "The Seventh-day Adventist Evangelical Conferences of 1955-1956," *Adventist Heritage*, vol. 4, no. 2,38
3. Samples, "From Controversy to Crisis"
4. Unruh, 41
5. Donald Grey Barnhouse, 'Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?' *Eternity*, September 1956 (Jeff Reich, compiler, *The M. L. Andreasen File: Manuscripts and Letters Pertaining to the Evangelical Conference of 1955-1956*, *Laymen Ministry News*, St. Maries, ID, (1988), 107)
6. *Ibid.*, 108
7. *Ibid.*, 110; emphasis in original
8. For a discussion of the September 1956 and April 1957 *Ministry* articles, see Ralph Larson, *The Word Was Made Flesh*, Cherrystone Press, Cherry Valley, CA, (1988), 224-228,232-240
9. This article is discussed at length by M. L. Andreasen in a letter written February 15,1957, (Reich, 1)
10. See Reich, 1
11. *Ibid.*, 41. See also M. L. Andreasen, *Letters to the Churches*, available from Leaves-of-Autumn Books
12. See Reich, 51
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, 54
15. Andreasen, 70-73; emphasis in original
16. Reich, 103-104
17. Minutes of the 1961 Spring Council filed in General Conference archives (Virginia Steinweg, *Without Fear or Favor: The Life of M. L. Andreasen*, 180)
18. Reich, 106
19. For an in-depth account of this time period, see Russell R. Standish and Colin D. Standish, *Adventism Challenged*, volumes one and two
20. See Geoffrey Paxton, *The Shaking of Adventism*, Zenith Publishers, Wilmington, DE, (1977),107-115
21. *Ibid.*, 112
22. See Robert D. Brinsmead, *1844 Re-examined*
23. *Verdict*, June 1981
24. For a complete analysis of this passage, see Larson, 249-259
25. For an excellent summary of the developing discussion of the human nature of Christ, see Bruno W. Steinweg, *The Doctrine of the Human Nature of Christ Among Adventists Since 1950*, revised edition
26. Thomas A. Davis, *Romans for the Everyday Man*, 105 (Steinweg, 10)
27. Herbert E. Douglass, "The Humanity of the Son of God Is Everything to Us," *Review and Herald*, December 23,1971 (Steinweg, 10)
28. Letter, Douglass to Steinweg, January 12,1986 (Steinweg, 12)
29. *Review and Herald*, May 27,1976 (Steinweg, 15)
30. Jack D. Walker, *Adventist News Service*, Goodlettsville, TN (Steinweg, 13)
31. Letter, Willard L. Santee to Walter Martin, (n.d.)
32. Letter, Walter Martin to Willard Santee, December 9,1980
33. *The Kingdom of the Cults*, Zondervan, (1985), 410
34. *Ibid.*

35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., 434
37. Ibid.
38. It is interesting to note that in *The Kingdom of the Cults* Martin presents a lengthy discussion of Ellen White's ministry, including a mention of this charge of Arianism. Yet nowhere does he produce any evidence to support his claim. Elder Johnsson is to be pardoned for his ignorance of such "evidence."
39. Samples, 12
40. Ibid., 14 (emphasis supplied). That many still in denominational employ are sympathetic with Ford's positions is obvious from his continuing high profile in Adventist circles. An editorial in the March 1991 *Dialogue*, a monthly publication of the Loma Linda University Church of Seventh-day Adventists, portrays well the continuing dilemma he poses:
 "To some, Desmond Ford is a hero. He lost his ministerial credentials because he was willing to say what he believed, regardless of the consequences. To others, Ford has done incalculable damage to the Seventh-day Adventist church by attempting to destroy its foundation.
 "Just who is this man? What does he believe? The opportunity to hear him for myself presented itself on Sabbath afternoon, February 2, in the University Church Chapel, where Ford was invited to speak by Adventist Forum. Ford resides in Auburn, California, where he is a member of the Pacific Union College Seventh-day Adventist church."
41. Ibid.
42. "Meeting Between Walter Martin, Ken Samples, and the Faculty of the School of Religion, Loma Linda University (Loma Linda and La Sierra Campuses) at Linda Hall of the Campus Hill Seventh-day Adventist Church on Thursday, January 26 from 1 to 3 PM.," 1. This 56-page typewritten transcript presents the dialogue of the second of two meetings held on this date; hence it will hereafter be referred to as Transcript Two
43. "Walter Martin and Ken Samples Meeting with Ministers, Loma Linda Campus Hill Seventh-day Adventist Church, January 26, 1989," 3. This 57-page typewritten transcript presents the dialogue of the first of two meetings held on this date; hence it will hereafter be referred to as Transcript One
44. Transcript Two, 1
45. Ibid., 6
46. Transcript One, 11-12
47. Ibid., 18
48. Ibid., 26-27
49. Ibid., 31-33
50. Ibid., 40 41
51. Ibid., 38
52. Transcript Two, 28-29
53. Transcript One, 35
54. Transcript Two, 36-38
55. Ibid., 48
56. *Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1896
57. Transcript Two, 12
58. *The Paulson Collection*, 206
59. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 408

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

Just Before

SEVENTH-DAY Adventists have a heritage of eschatology. As a people, we trace our beginning to the Millerite movement of the 1830s and 1840s. We preach the everlasting gospel as found in the final three messages of warning to the inhabitants of earth. We look forward to the second coming of Christ as the ultimate answer to the problems of Sunday laws and death decrees. Yes, we have always had a keen interest in coming events.

Nearly a century and a half ago, our spiritual forebears produced the famous 1843 Chart, and we still find time and interest to map out—as accurately as human wisdom can—the details of prophecies as yet unfulfilled.

To the skeptic, all this seems more than a little bizarre. And we must admit that some products of this process have been long on imagination and short on accuracy. But we cannot discard the truth of what is to come upon the world in its closing days.

And yet, for all the interest displayed in coming events, there is one major area which seldom receives attention. We know well the prophecies concerning wars and rumors of wars, the rising of the lamblike nation, and the enforcing of the mark of the beast. We follow the development of the labor unions, recognizing the role they are to play. We have watched with amazement as the predicted threefold union of Catholicism, apostate Protestantism, and Spiritualism has formed before our eyes. But have we noticed the predictions of Inspiration that come closer home? What does God have to say about *us* in the days just before the close of probation?

Although there are not a great many such prophecies, they are of more than passing interest. We are to know the signs of the times. We are to know when the King is at the door. As we near the end of all things, the counsels and warnings given specifically for that time can only increase in importance.

With a Bedlam of Noise

At the turn of the century a serious outbreak of fanaticism occurred in the state of Indiana. Known as the "Holy Flesh movement," it swept through the churches of the area confusing laity, pastors, and the majority of the conference officers. We can be thankful that this blot on our denomination's history was relatively short-lived. Nonetheless, Ellen G. White's counsel to those involved is full of lessons for us today. We note especially her comments on some of the forms of "worship" practiced by the advocates of this movement:

"The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

"The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working....

"Last January the Lord showed me that erroneous theories and methods would be brought into our camp meetings.... I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ."

Incredible as it may seem, scenes of this nature are to take place in Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings *just before the close of probation*. Such a scene was almost impossible for generations of Adventists to imagine, accustomed as they were to the familiar strains of the doxology. But times are changing.

Recent years have seen experimentation with new "forms of worship" within Adventism. The danger of a dead, formal religion presents obvious reasons to consider at least a variety of worship practices, but there is need for care and caution that all be done according to the Lord's will. A magazine article describing the worship services of two influential West Coast churches provides food for thought:

"You begin to realize that something is different when you drive into the church parking lot. There are no spaces available. Not just during the 11 o'clock hour, but during all three church services held every Sabbath morning.... You enter a circular sanctuary that seems to resonate with life. Instead of organ music and hymnals, each service features lively Christian music with the words projected on a huge, overhead screen. The second service, which is filled with high-school and college-aged young people, includes a contemporary Christian band with drums, synthesizers, and electric guitars. Praise and celebration dominate the service; members worship God by raising their hands, clapping, and spontaneously shouting for joy."²

The author contends that the two congregations under discussion "provide dramatic examples of what the Spirit is doing in Adventist worship today."

As might be expected, opinions vary considerably as to the value of these new worship practices. The word "celebration" will never again carry a neutral connotation within Adventism. Comparisons with the holy flesh move-

ment of Indiana have been obvious, and have been as vigorously denied as they have been advocated. The letters columns of Adventist periodicals (when not closed to the subject by editorial policy) have testified to the strong feelings of rank and file membership.

Is this a fulfillment of Ellen White's prediction? Is the close of probation just ahead? If not, what should we expect as a fulfillment? When Ellen White predicts that "every uncouth thing will be demonstrated," what does she mean?

The problem goes beyond specifics, however. No matter how minutely the Lord might describe apostasy, apostates will find a way to justify it in their own minds. As both Ellen White and the author of the magazine article point out, it is a matter of the "Spirit." In the final analysis, those who respond to the voice of the Holy Spirit "shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."⁴

On the Borders of Canaan

The events of the Old Testament are recorded for our admonition. One of these which we are told is of special significance to us in the end of time is the woeful experience of Israel at Baal-peor. Sadly, the devil still finds time and opportunity to lead the professed people of God into sins of licentiousness.

"Near the close of this earth's history Satan will work with all his powers in the same manner and with the same temptations wherewith he tempted ancient Israel just before their entering the Land of Promise. He will lay snares for those who claim to keep the commandments of God, and who are almost on the borders of the heavenly Canaan.... [Satan] is not aiming especially at the lower and less important marks, but he makes use of his snares through those whom he can enlist as his agents to allure or attract men to take liberties which are condemned in the law of God. And men in responsible positions, teaching the claims of God's law, whose mouths are filled with arguments in vindication of His law, against which Satan has made such a raid—over such he sets his hellish powers and his agencies at work, and overthrows them upon the weak points in their character, knowing that he who offends on one point is guilty of all, thus obtaining complete mastery over the entire man. Mind, soul, body, and conscience are involved in the ruin. If he be a messenger of righteousness and has had great light, or if the Lord has used him as His special worker in the cause of truth, then how great is the triumph of Satan! How he exults! How God is dishonored!...

"The very same Satan is now working to the very same end, to weaken and destroy the people who claim to be keeping the commandments of God, as they are just on the borders of the heavenly Canaan. Satan knows it is his time. He has but little time left now in which to work, and he will work with tremendous power to ensnare the people of God upon their weak points of character....

"The point to be marked [in the account of Baal-peor] is that Moses' prayers were not heard, neither his weeping nor the sorrow and prayers of those who had maintained their integrity, until justice was executed upon that demoral-

ized, God-defying prince. God says of Phinehas, He 'hath turned away my wrath from the children of Israel.' It was the greatest mercy that Phinehas could do to Israel, to deal promptly and decidedly with the guilty, and thus be instrumental in turning the wrath of God from the congregation of Israel. Something besides prayers and tears are needed in a time when reproach and peril are hanging over God's people. The wicked works must be brought to an end. The very work of justice done by Phinehas was an atonement for Israel."⁵

The Great Final Test

There are many statements from the pen of Ellen White which speak of "final" events in one way or another Obviously, all such statements are more or less related, and all might well find a place in this chapter did space allow. Of particular interest is the following which speaks of a final test:

"The truth for this time, the third angel's message, is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, meaning with increasing power, as we approach the great final test. This test must come to the churches in connection with the true medical missionary work, a work that has the Great Physician to dictate and preside in all it comprehends."⁶

We normally think of the final test as being over the Sabbath—but what do we do with this statement? There are a number of intriguing aspects to its wording: what "churches" are spoken of here? Are they local Seventh-day Adventist churches or are these the churches of apostate Protestantism? And how is the test to be "in connection with the true medical missionary work"?

Perhaps this warning given in 1904 will help: "We need not be deceived. Wonderful scenes, with which Satan will be closely connected, will soon take place. God's Word declares that Satan will work miracles. He will make people sick, and then will suddenly remove from them his satanic power. They will then be regarded as healed. These works of apparent healing will bring Seventh-day Adventists to the test. Many who have had great light will fail to walk in the light, because they have not become one with Christ."⁷

Though this reference was already considered in chapter thirty-one, it deserves special emphasis in the context of predicted events just prior to the closing up of earthly history.

It is no secret that there is an increasing overlap between the systems and methodologies of "traditional" medicine and the mystical techniques of "Eastern" or "inner" healing. A few years ago the Western world would have collectively had a good, hearty laugh over the thought that little needles stuck all over the body could do anything about arthritis. But consider the current popularity of acupuncture. Something has happened, and unfortunately it has not been entirely outside of Adventism.

Such practices as gem therapy, pendulum diagnosis, and the like have made inroads among our people in recent years. Even greater danger stems from the various "mind sciences" such as Eberhard Seminars Training (EST), and falsely labeled "Christian Meditation" classes. These have all found their

way into the realm of "miracles," totally apart from any known physical or physiological process.

Those familiar with the mind-control and manipulation techniques of EST will not be surprised to learn that the leaders of the so-called "Lord Our Righteousness" separatist movement which gained brief notoriety in the late 1980s used these techniques extensively in the process of their "evangelizing." The results were plainly seen in the extreme personality changes undergone by the hundreds of unwary Adventists who were caught up in this fanatical movement.

At about the same time, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) was making its entry into Adventism through the teachings of John Savage. Packaged as an integral part of "Lab I—The Calling and Caring Ministries" and "Lab II—Training to be a Lab I Leader," NLP seems to hold special appeal for those involved in professional counseling.

It would be foolish to assert that there is nothing good offered in these courses. But the philosophical company they keep is far from desirable. In an undated flier, Richard Clarke, the Director of the New England Institute for Neuro-Linguistic Programming, lauds the work of Finbar Nolan, an "Irish healer whose work has been well documented over the past thirty years for a wide variety of physical ills ranging through tumors, epilepsy, ulcerative colitis, myopia, skin disorders, etc." Clarke approvingly describes how "Finbar places his hands in a certain way on the afflicted area and in about fifty to eighty-five percent [of the cases] the affliction disappears or is cured in a relatively short period."

Why is this of interest to Clarke? He explains that "NLP holds that skills one person manifests can be modeled and acquired by others using appropriate technology. In 1985 a number of people studied Finbar Nolan under John Grinder's guidance and some successfully acquired Finbar Nolan's gift, including Linda Shapiro and myself." (It should be noted that John Grinder is credited as one of the co-developers of NLP)

There is a proper place for the study of learning and teaching techniques. But a "gift of healing" clearly falls outside the range of calm, theoretical science. A gift must come from someone; if there is a gift, there must be a *giver*. Mr. Clarke did not offer any observations as to the source of this gift.

But Mt Savage did. In a telephone interview, he was asked, "How do we separate Mr. Nolan's psychic healing from that of the psychic healers of the Far East?" His response was, "You don't. *All healing is of a psychic nature*. Wherever there is healing, there is the presence of Christ." Further questioning revealed that, in his mind, even the healing work of a pagan witch-doctor "comes from God."⁸

Nonetheless, Inspiration repeatedly warns us from the ground of using miracles as any sort of test to validate the teachings or beliefs of any one or any group. This problem, too, is just before us: "The day is just before us when Satan will answer the demand of these doubters and present numerous miracles to confirm the faith of all those who are seeking this kind of evidence.

How terrible will be the situation of those who close their eyes to the light of truth and ask for miracles to establish them in deception!"

The Sabbath

No matter what other issues play a part in the closing days of this earth's probation, the seventh-day Sabbath will have the central role. We know this on the clear testimony of Ellen White: "The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part."¹¹

"When the test comes, it will be clearly shown what the mark of the beast is. It is the keeping of Sunday."¹²

While the certainty of such statements is helpful, there is also the danger of adopting a too simplistic view of the issue. To assume that a setting aside of our daily labor on the seventh day is a sure protection against the mark of the beast is dangerously naïve. The devil is, after all, too wily a foe to make the matter quite that simple.

Keeping the Sabbath is more than a matter of mechanical obedience. As were the Jews, we might be rigorously punctilious in our observance of the form of the day, and still fail completely in our efforts to "keep" it. Twice in Scripture (Exodus 31:13, Ezekiel 20:12) we are admonished that the Sabbath is a sign that it is the Lord who "*sanctifies*" us. Is that goal of so little importance that we may set it aside at will? Would it make no difference to God whether or not we had a proper understanding of sanctification, or even believed in it at all?

The issues surrounding the Sabbath are not yet fully understood. This is clear from the simple statement that, "When the refreshing and latter rain shall come from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, we shall know what it is to be fed with the heritage of Jacob and ride upon the high places of the earth. Then shall we see the Sabbath more in its importance and glory."¹²

More ominous, though, is the warning that "The mark of the beast is to be presented *in some shape* to every institution and every individual."¹³ It would appear that the mark of the beast, too, is more involved than we sometimes view it.

Granting that we do not yet understand either the Sabbath or the mark of the beast in all their fullness, would not the recognition that they are opposites make it a fearful proposition to treat lightly that of which the Sabbath is a sign? Perhaps a refusal to recognize the sanctifying role of the Sabbath does not constitute the mark of the beast. But can you think of a better way to prepare for it?

We Want to Understand

There has always been a fascination with the future. Human beings seem to have a universal desire to know what is to come. But our frivolous curiosity pales to insignificance beside the concern for understanding presented by Inspiration:

"We want to understand the time in which we live. We do not half understand it. We do not half take it in. My heart trembles in me when I think of what a foe we have to meet, and how poorly we are prepared to meet him. The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, have been presented before me again and again to illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ—how the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God's servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth."¹⁴

What is just before us? What were the trials and attitudes of the children of Israel two thousand years ago? Most of us probably have a fairly good idea already. If not, we need to spend some time reading the four gospels and *The Desire of Ages*. Suffice it to say that before the first coming of Christ, the trials and the attitudes of the children of Israel left much to be desired. All in all, their spiritual condition was far from what we might have wished it to be.

And what does that mean to us? It means that if we follow in the footsteps of Christ, we may expect to be received and treated in a manner similar to that in which Jesus was received.

"The condition of the world previous to the first appearing of Christ is a picture of the condition of the world just previous to His second advent. The same iniquity will exist, Satan manifests the same delusive power upon the minds of men. He is setting his trained agents at work, and moving them to intense activity.... He will turn his forces against those who are loyal to God, but though he may cause pain, distress, and human agony, he cannot defile the soul. He may cause affliction to the people of God as he did to Christ, but he cannot cause one of Christ's little ones to perish. The people of God in these last days must expect to enter into the thick of the conflict; for the prophetic Word says, 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'"¹⁵

"If we are to bear a part in this work to its close, we must recognize the fact that there are good things to come to the people of God in a way that we had not discerned; and that there will be resistance from the very ones we expected to engage in such a work."¹⁶

No, this time just before the end of all things is not for those who seek quietude and restfulness. While their hearts may be quiet, and they may rest in Christ, all around them will be turmoil. Indeed, it will appear to some as though they themselves are the cause of the turmoil. But the command is clear:

"In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that which John did, is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord is giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all heed the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was,

Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; 'for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ's soon appearing, we have a definite message to bear—'Prepare to meet thy God.'¹⁷

Some Final Questions

If these are the circumstances which are to prevail just before the closing up of this world's sorry history, we, as Seventh-day Adventists, have some serious thinking to do. We need to ask ourselves how near we are to fulfilling these predictions. We need to consider what we might do to minimize the loss of souls from the impending snares of the devil. And—perhaps most important—we need to ponder well the preparations we are making to meet these conditions ourselves.

"Satan is marshaling his hosts; and are we individually prepared for the fearful conflict that is just before us? Are we preparing our children for the great crisis? Are we preparing ourselves and our households to understand the position of our adversaries and their modes of warfare? Are our children forming habits of decision, that they may be firm and unyielding in every matter of principle and duty? I pray that we all may understand the signs of the times, and that we may so prepare ourselves and our children that in the time of conflict God may be our refuge and defense."¹⁸

Do we believe the end of the world is just before us? Do we really care? It is easy to tell; just look around and ask, 'Are we preparing?'

1. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 36-37
2. Steve Daily, "Church Growth Bloweth Where It Listeth," *Spectrum*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2
3. *Ibid.*, 3
4. John 4:23
5. *Review and Herald*, May 17, 1887
6. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1710
7. *Selected Messages*, book 2, 53
8. Jeff Reich, *The New Age Connection*, Layman Ministry News, St. Manes, ID (n.d.), 5
9. *Evangelism*, 594
10. *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 352
11. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 977
12. *Selected Messages*, book 3, 388
13. *Ibid.*, 395, emphasis supplied
14. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 406
15. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1153
16. *Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 1024
17. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1184
18. *The Adventist Home*, 186

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

Vindication!

THE desire for vindication is probably one of the most universal human longings. Even when we may not be so direct as to say "I told you so," it is natural (and not necessarily wrong) to take some satisfaction in the thought or experience of others realizing that the position you have taken is correct. True enough, pride can all too readily inject the desire for another's humiliation or one's own exaltation, but this does not detract from the legitimate desire for others to recognize as true and right that which *is* true and right.

Like those He has created, God looks forward to a day of vindication. For thousands of years He has patiently pursued the costly policy of demonstrating the validity of His own principles of government. Throughout our denominational history we find this to be a recurring theme. A uniquely Adventist concept, it goes like this: the final generation of believers will perfect their characters, reflect the image of Jesus fully, live without sin through the time of trouble, and thus "vindicate the character of God." Implied by this scenario are several points well worth noting. Foremost, perhaps, is that God should even choose to follow such a course. Why not, rather, simply pronounce His own correctness? Why go to the expense of a demonstration? Why take the time? And why wait for the "final generation" to meet this as yet unmet challenge?

The last three questions are, in reality, so closely related as to be nearly identical. For *time is expense*. Not in terms of dollars, of course, but in the more expensive currency of suffering. For every day that passes, a terrible toll is exacted from the millions inhabiting this sinful planet. But more than that, God Himself suffers to a degree we cannot comprehend and seldom consider.

"Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God. Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him."

Suffering is important. It makes time expensive. Were there no suffering, we might imagine that God would have no incentive to deal with sin now as opposed to, say, a few million years from now. Without suffering, why hurry?

But suffering is a sword which cuts two ways. While it assures us that God has good reason to seek a resolution to the "great controversy," it also raises questions as to why He allows it to drag on. Really now, why *doesn't* He put an end to rebellion—and suffering as well?

While we may not be able to comprehend all that is involved in an issue such as this, still it must be admitted that God's present relation to the continued existence of sin must fall into one of four categories. The options are

1. He *cannot* put an end to sin.
2. He *can* put an end to sin, but doesn't *want* to.
3. He *can* put an end to sin, but has simply neglected to do so.
4. He *can* put an end to sin, but has reasons of sufficient importance to justify His allowing it to continue temporarily.

It takes no theological training to see that the first three options are hopelessly at odds with the testimony of Inspiration.

If sin caused no suffering, we might assume that there was little or no need to eliminate it from the universe. If sin caused none but sinful creatures to suffer, we might assume that God lacked the compassion required to motivate Him to eliminate it from the universe. But since the Creator Himself, as well as His creatures, suffers from sin we are more likely to assume that there is yet some powerful reason which delays its elimination. The obvious question: "What possible reason could be given for delaying the extermination of sin?"

Fortunately, we have ready answers:

"For what [purpose] was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? Why was it that Satan's existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God's justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look."²

"God in His wisdom did not use measures of force to suppress Satan's rebellion. Such measures would have aroused sympathy for Satan, strengthening his rebellion rather than lessening his power. If God had at the outset punished his rebellion, many more would have looked upon him as one who had been dealt with unjustly, and would have followed his example. It was necessary for him to have time and opportunity to develop his false principles."³

"The great God could at once have hurled this arch deceiver from Heaven; but this was not his purpose.... If God had exercised his power to punish this chief rebel, disaffected angels would not have been manifested; hence God took another course; for he would manifest distinctly to all the heavenly host his justice and his judgment."⁴

"God in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature and tendency might be seen by all. Lucifer, as the anointed cherub, had been highly exalted; he was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong.... He had artfully presented his side of the question, employing sophistry and fraud to secure his

objects. His power to deceive was very great, and by disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood he had gained an advantage. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading."

The difficulty with these answers is, once again, the passing of time. Each of these points is offered as a reason for not destroying Satan at the time of his fall. But what about now? Hasn't there been time enough for all these things to happen?

Isn't the Battle Over?

At this point, the evidence becomes somewhat more involved. Certain quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy would *seem* to indicate that these issues were all finalized at the cross; other statements clearly say that issues still remain. For example:

"The life of Christ was a most perfect and thorough vindication of His Father's law, and His death attested its immutability."⁶

"The plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe.... The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the rebellion of Satan. It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God and would reveal the nature and the results of sin."⁷

"Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. Then the prevarications and accusations of him who had once been an exalted angel were seen in their true light. It was seen that his professedly spotless character was deceptive. His deeply laid scheme to exalt himself to supremacy was fully discerned. His falsehoods were apparent to all. God's authority was forever established. Truth triumphed over falsehood."⁸

As conclusive as such statements may sound when taken by themselves, there is nonetheless another category of evidence. Though some might be tempted to concoct a "contradiction" out of this, it is evident that Ellen White saw none. Speaking of the effects of Christ's sacrifice, she observes:

"Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken.

"Yet Satan was not then destroyed. The angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the great controversy. The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed. And for the sake of man, Satan's existence must be continued. Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of Light and the prince of darkness. He must choose whom he will serve."⁹

How Could it Take so Long?

Once again we are confronted with questions. Why did it require four thousand years for unfallen beings see Satan in his true light? "He had revealed himself as a murderer." Hadn't that been obvious from the time of Cain onward? How many million murders had there been? Didn't they count?

No, not as conclusive evidence, anyway. Nothing in the accumulated woe of four thousand years had clearly demonstrated what the crucifixion did. For one simple reason: all who had died prior to Christ were sinners. Satan had the perfect alibi—it was God's law, not his, which said that sinners must die. Not until the death of Christ was it shown that Satan would kill an innocent Being.

More surprising yet is the continuing need for additional evidence, even after the cross. What more could be added? Is not the death of Christ sufficient to prove the diabolical nature of Satan and sin?

To pursue these questions further, we need to consider the purpose and nature of God's efforts to vindicate Himself. Note first that vindication is not the simple demonstration of superior strength or wisdom. Vindication involves the answering of specific charges. The outright destruction of Satan would silence his voice, but would not remove his accusations. This is clear from the Godhead's original decision to allow time for the development of Lucifer's principles of government. Secondly, note that vindication *requires demonstration*. No matter what may be said by either party in the meantime, the issue will remain unresolved until objective, demonstrable evidence clearly establishes which of the two positions is correct.

This later point may seem obvious enough, but its implications are profound in the context of the plan of salvation. If the issues of the great controversy are to be decided by demonstration, it must be assumed that those watching the contest are both capable and able to form their own conclusions. This is easy enough to believe in the case of unfallen beings, but note that mankind is also to decide, each person for himself.

A very practical difficulty intrudes just here in the form of human weakness. If the deceptions of Satan were so clever that it required four thousand years to remove all affection for him from the hearts of the angels, how could a human being—possessed of far less intelligence, and seeing far less of the available evidence—possibly be expected to decide in a mere "three score and ten"? This question may sound frivolous on first consideration, but the easy answers we give raise a whole new crop of questions.

There seems to be only one solution. Since the restraints of mortality do not permit the luxury of thousands of years in which to make one's decision, each human being must be tested on only that which he has had opportunity to

evaluate for himself. We often speak of this as being held accountable only for the light which we have had. Another aspect of the same issue is the Lord's promise that we will not be "tempted above that ye are able."¹⁰

All this means that humanity has to some extent been shielded from the devil's delusions. This is not to say that we have seen through them more quickly than the unfallen worlds, but that we haven't seen them at all. Put bluntly, God has prevented the devil from using his most convincing arguments on us, simply because we have been unable to deal with them.

This may sound fair and just to us, perhaps, but consider for a moment the devil's opinion. Put yourself in his place. Would you be happy? Would you consider it fair? And, too, what might the unfallen angels think? If vindication is to take place within the arena of conscious choice and intelligent evaluation of the conflicting claims, such "censoring" of the opposition's case seriously compromises any demonstration of human loyalty.

And the issue only compounds itself when the matter of those who have already died is introduced into the discussion. Since the Lord proposes to accept many resurrected ones—who have never been exposed to the "best" arguments of Satan—into the very family of God, would you not expect the unfallen angels to feel a good deal of concern? Remember, Lucifer's compatriots were their friends and companions just a few thousand years ago. If angels could fall so far, what guarantee is there for these untested, sinful humans?

To counter the concerns of both fallen and unfallen angels, the Lord must do two things: He must show that mankind is capable of facing—and defeating—the whole scope of sin's deceptions, and He must show that there is some identifiable factor invariably associated with this victory. In other words, He must show that all who do overcome sin have a common characteristic which is not possessed by any who—having been given opportunity—failed to overcome, a certain distinguishing characteristic which *always* leads to total victory. Once these two facts are demonstrated, it is logically inescapable that those who have died possessing this certain characteristic would also have rejected the deceptions of the devil had they been afforded time and opportunity. By virtue of this one characteristic, they would be counted safe to accept into the community of heaven.

Righteousness Really is by Faith

All this may sound strange, but we are solidly back on the beaten theological track. This vital characteristic, this invariable distinction between the righteous and the wicked, is nothing other than "faith."

Now, perhaps, we are better able to deal with the necessity of additional evidence, even after the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. We have seen two points of concern—one from the devil, the other from the unfallen members of the universe—which still await resolution. And since both have to do with the actual choices of individual, fallen, sinful human beings, it should be no surprise that the sacrifice of Christ could not directly supply the necessary evidence. Do not, however, jump to the conclusion that man is the source of

either his own salvation or the Lord's vindication. While mankind does have a role to play, still it is an eternal truth that all good flows forth from God. Should any man, anywhere, at any time, live a life of obedience to the law of God, he owes it to the power of Christ.

In fact, mankind's role in God's vindication has thus far been little else but a delay. The cross answered many of the devil's charges, and it would appear that—with the exception of the accusations concerning mankind—the universe may have already turned in a verdict of "not guilty" on all accounts. Notice:

"Should all the inhabitants of this little world refuse obedience to God, He would not be left without glory. He could sweep every mortal from the face of the earth in a moment, and create a new race to people it and glorify His name. God is not dependent on man for honor."¹¹

"But the work of human redemption is not all that is accomplished by the cross. The love of God is manifested to the universe. The prince of this world is cast out. The accusations which Satan has brought against God are refuted. The reproach which he has cast upon heaven is forever removed."¹²

As cheering as that may be, there are questions surrounding mankind which seem to be still pending. Despite the reality of the Saviour's humanity, the question of *human* obedience is apparently somehow unresolved.

"Satan declared that it was impossible for the sons and daughters of Adam to keep the law of God, and thus charged upon God a lack of wisdom and love. If they could not keep the law, then there was fault with the Lawgiver."¹³

"The Lord desires through His people to answer Satan's charges by showing the results of obedience to right principles."¹⁴

Granted even that a final generation of God's people should perfect their characters and live in harmony with His law, Satan has another argument:

The Challenge of Forgiveness

"Satan declared that there is no forgiveness with God; that if God should forgive sin, he would make His law of no effect. He says to the sinner, You are lost."¹⁵

As late as the time of Jacob's trouble this argument comes up against God's people: Satan "has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these before God in the most exaggerated light, representing this people to be just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. He declares that the Lord cannot in justice forgive their sins and yet destroy him and his angels. He claims₁₆ them as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to destroy.

That Satan would use this issue as his last-ditch argument should not be passed over lightly. We are so used to a system of human justice which can forgive at will, that we seldom find merit in the devil's claim that the Judge of the universe can't forgive our sins. "Of course He can," we say. "His death on Calvary gives Him the right to forgive sins."

But still there is something ominous about the devil's use of an argument which—from our point of view—should have been disarmed nearly two

thousand years ago. If, as was suggested earlier, Satan has arguments which we have not yet had to meet, it would seem likely that this question of God's right to forgive is on his list. But the Lord is never unprepared. Though Satan may yet have arguments to present on this most basic level, the Lord appears to have held arguments of His own in reserve for just such a challenge: "There is much light yet to shine forth from the law of God and the gospel of righteousness. This message, understood in its true character, and proclaimed in the Spirit, will lighten the earth with its glory."¹⁷

Vindication is a long, hard process. The suffering of millions of men, women, and children—the suffering of the Godhead—make it incredibly expensive. Is it worth it?

Yes. Yes, it is worth all the time it takes. Whether the process should end in our lifetime or not, it will be worth the wait. But can we not do more than wait? Can we not determine that the witness of our actions, our choices, our lives, shall be wholly on the side of Christ? Can we not work as we have never worked before, study as we have never studied before? "The Lord desires through His people to answer Satan's charges." Can we not replace our concern for *our* salvation with the larger concern for Christ's vindication?

With us, or without us, the Lord has said that His great plan to secure the best good of the universe will at last be complete.

"The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe.... A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom."¹⁸

One day the work of vindication will be accomplished. And by the grace of God, human beings will be granted the opportunity to play a part in the process. Is there any stronger motivation to holiness? Is there any better reason to be a Seventh-day Adventist?

1. *Education*, 263

2. *Ibid.*, 308

3. *Signs of the Times*, July 23, 1902

4. *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 21

5. *The Great Controversy*, 497

6. *This Day With God*, 246

7. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 68-69

8. *Signs of the Times*, August 27, 1902

9. *The Desire of Ages*, 761

10. 1 Corinthians 10:23

11. *Review and Herald*, March 1, 1881

12. *The Desire of Ages*, 625

13. *Signs of the Times*, January 16, 1896

14. *Christ's Object Lessons*, 296

15. *Review and Herald*, January 19, 1911

16. *The Great Controversy*, 618

17. *This Day With God*, 314

18. *Great Controversy*, 504

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

But Where's the Evidence?

OVER the years I have been favored with a steady trickling of new (and a few old) documents diligently prepared at the expense of much time and effort advising me to withdraw my membership from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Now this is a matter of considerable importance to me, and so I have taken occasion now and then to examine these gifts of someone's generosity. I have noted with interest the various lines of thought, the different points of reasoning, and the range of conclusions presented in these works.

On the whole, they may be characterized by two points: a strong concern over our failure as a people to fulfill the Lord's will for us (a concern I share), and an advocacy of separation from the Seventh-day Adventist Church (a position I do not hold). In every case the author sees a strong connection between these two points. Having sufficiently established the first point (which was self-evident to begin with) these authors believe they have sufficiently established the second point as well. Right here I have a problem.

It is interesting to note the differing opinions among the various authors as to exactly when and for what reason the Seventh-day Adventist Church ceased to be God's remnant church. For some, it was the rewriting of the denominational constitution in 1903. Others point to the publishing of books containing dangerously erroneous doctrinal positions.

That every error in the church is cause for repentance, revival, and reformation is an undisputed fact. That any particular error, or even an accumulation of errors, has resulted in God's rejection of His once-chosen people requires clear demonstration. The question is, can it be demonstrated?

Some of the larger works of this class contain very detailed year-by-year delineations of the trouble spots in our denominational history. Such knowledge can be extremely useful as "examples unto us upon whom the ends of the world are come." Some of these failings, particularly the more recent ones, are of value in pointing out specific wrongs which in all fairness deserve to be righted. On these points I have little cause for quarrel with certain of the authors. Still, there is the "conclusion of the whole matter" which I find troublesome.

The concept of separating from the organized church body stems from a conviction that God Himself has separated from that body; therefore, in order to avoid separation from God, the individual also must separate from the

church. Consequently the question hinges on whether or not God has completely and irrevocably separated Himself from that organized body of believers known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

How Would God Tell Us?

Certainly this is a matter of sufficient import that the Lord would inform us of His intentions. We are promised, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." How then might we expect such a revelation to occur? Herein lies the difficulty with what might be spoken of as the compiled-record-of-sins approach. Given the facts that every sin is serious, and that even one cherished sin is sufficient to separate a person from God, we still must decide how many sins are required to fill the "cup of iniquity."

The case of Achan may come to mind in this regard; but note that the lesson there was different. The Lord demonstrated once for all time that His people could never accomplish His will while there was sin in the camp. Israel would have to be pure to expect the Lord's full blessing. But did that one sin completely and irrevocably separate God from the children of Israel? No, of course not, for in a matter of days the process of repentance, revival, and reformation had prepared the way for Israel to once again move on successfully in the way of God's choosing.

Then how many sins does it take? Obviously we are into sensitive territory with a question like that. Who, having previously been told that the "iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16), would trust his own judgment to know that the refusal of a courteous request was the final act of defiance which marked the filling up of their cup of iniquity?²

Surely there is a more dependable way to decide. One approach would be to show that the church had committed *specific* sins which an inspired source indicates to be sufficient cause for the irrevocable withdrawal of God's presence. A ready example of this would be the earmarks of Babylon—"the natural immortality of the soul, the eternal torment of the wicked, the denial of the pre-existence of Christ prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting the first day of the week above God's holy and sanctified day."³

Should the Seventh-day Adventist Church as an organized body adopt these doctrines as their message to the world, I would have no difficulty in deciding to withdraw my membership. I doubt that any sincere student of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy would. But lacking evidence of anything other than (at best) poor judgment or (at worst) determined apostasy on these points by *certain* individuals—admittedly, sometimes prominent individuals—I cannot see that this method gives clear indication of a need to sever my connection with the church body at this time.

Elijah

While considering this point we may well look back to the time of Elijah. I cannot help but ponder the course of action which I suppose the authors of these books would have felt compelled to choose during the reign of Ahab. If

ever a high official of the chosen people of God departed from the Lord, it was Ahab. Yet all his devotion to the worship of Baal, and his support of hundreds of heathen priests did not prevent Elijah from praying, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel."⁴

Elijah did not feel that his sojourn in Zarephath had made him one whit less an Israelite, and his conviction remained unchanged that the Lord was "God in Israel."

Drawing from this experience, indeed from the whole sorry record of the ancient church, I conclude that the unrighteous actions of delegated officials do not, *in and of themselves*, constitute sufficient cause for the complete and irrevocable departure of God's presence. Yet I would not in the least minimize the seriousness of such actions. A fearful price must one day be paid by all who commit and sustain—even by silence—such actions. Membership in the remnant church is no automatic ticket to heaven. It carries with the honor an accountability which too few are willing to bear.

By far the simplest method which the Lord could use to indicate His complete and irrevocable departure from our midst would be a straightforward declaration from the mouth or pen of an acknowledged prophet of God. We should rather expect to see such a pronouncement prominently displayed in any publication maintaining that the rejection of the Seventh-day Adventist Church came before the death of Ellen White. There are, of course, those publications which contain clear statements of this kind from other "prophets" of more recent years, but as they fail on several points to meet the specifications of "an acknowledged prophet of God," I'll simply skip over such.

Again, I find myself faced with puzzling difficulties as I read examples of this line of reasoning. For, try as they might, the various authors I have read on this point fail quite miserably in their efforts to produce that "straightforward declaration." Worse, I find signs of intentional misrepresentation, and a striking absence of information which would clearly call into question the conclusions of the authors.

One example asks the question, "Did Mrs. White separate from our professed but false church?" Aside from the prejudiced depiction of the church, this is a perfectly valid question, entirely appropriate for the range of study contained in the volume. Quoting from a personal letter of Mrs. White's for which no readily available reference is listed, the author supplied this answer:

"I have but very little confidence that the Lord is giving these men in positions of responsibility, spiritual eyesight and heavenly discernment. I am thrown into perplexity over their course, and I desire now to attend to my special work. [I want] *to have no part in any of their councils, and to attend no camp meetings, nigh nor afar off. My mind shall not be dragged into confusion by the tendency they manifest to work directly contrary to the light that God has given me. I am done. I will preserve my God-given intelligence. My voice has been heard in the different conferences, and at camp meetings. I must now make a change.... I shall therefore, leave them to receive word from the Bible.... This is the light given me, and I shall not depart from it.*"⁵

But What Does It Mean?

An interesting letter. Clearly Ellen White was distressed over the actions of "these men in positions of responsibility." We can easily sympathize with her sorrow over their "tendency...to work directly contrary to the light." But does this letter depict a total separation from the organized body of the church as the author implies? Or does it represent a period of disentangling from perplexing situations in order to concentrate more closely on her "special work"?

A very simple method of judging the extent of this "separation" is to notice the entries in the *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White* under the heading "White, Ellen G. (biographical data)." Remembering that this letter was written December 2, 1902, we find her—five days later—writing a Testimony entitled "The Work in Europe." On January 5, 1903, she penned the memorable passage on "The Review and Herald Fire," now found in *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 97-101. On the third of April she addressed the full session of the General Conference meeting in Oakland, California. In May and June she was directing her attention to the relocation of the General Conference headquarters which she advised to be moved from Battle Creek. Beginning in April of 1904 she spent several months in the nation's capital assisting in the establishment of the newly moved offices.

Without belaboring the point, I notice that she attended the General Conference sessions of 1905 and 1909, both held in Washington, D.C. On the latter occasion she read to the delegates a Testimony entitled "The Spirit of Independence." In all of this, I somehow fail to see that she made any significant long-term separation from the church.

I am disturbed by the fact that none of this information is presented in the volume quoted from earlier. I am tempted to ask why it should have been left out. Was the author unaware of these facts? It seems unlikely, for he freely quotes her *Review and Herald* articles from as late as 1909. One wonders if he ever stopped to think that *someone in the church* was publishing her work. And what's more, *she was still writing it for them*. I fail to see the consistency of his position. And so it goes.

A Lesson From History

Another example from history comes to mind—the Essenes. In an effort to separate themselves from the sinfulness of Israel (and there was plenty of it, to be sure) they withdrew to their exclusive communes in the wilderness. I trust that the country environment was a blessing to them (more of us could learn a lesson on this point), and we can thank them for the preservation of the famous Dead Sea Scrolls. But I sometimes wonder where the Essenes were when Jesus Christ "came unto His own, and His own received him not." It is a sad fact that all we know of the Essenes comes from extraBiblical sources. For reasons best known to themselves, they played no active role in the greatest drama of history. Not one word is said of them in the pages of the New Testament. Where were they when He needed them?

A common line of reasoning among many who separate from the church is that history repeats itself. Church after church has apostatized and been rejected, they say. Should we not expect it of our church?

I freely admit that the challenges are great, greater than ever before in the 6,000 years of conflict. But I trust, too, in the promise that "he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning."⁷

History does all too often repeat itself, because we don't learn its lessons. And so I wonder, will there be "Essenes" in the last days, hiding away in their imagined caves of purity when the Lord God of Israel is working to save His church?

Apostasy, God has told us, will abound on every hand. The majority of church members will prove untrue. But that will all change. When the "spirit of judgment" and the "spirit of burning" are through with the church, it will present a far different appearance than it now does. When we are confronted, as where the Jews of Jesus' day, with the sum and substance of all that our divinely-inspired system of truth foreshadows, much will be swept away as useless or worse, when, if consecrated wholly to the purposes of God, it could have been a great blessing to the saving of souls. When faced with the unavoidable reality of required sanctification—of which the Sabbath has so long been a sign⁸—we will see more significance in our doctrine of a last-day judgment than we have imagined, and find the keeping of the fourth commandment a more important test than it now appears. Then it is that we will "return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."⁹

When the work goes forward "contrary to any human planning,"¹⁰ it will be contrary to my planning, too. But though the name Seventh-day Adventist be disgraced on every level; though every trusted friend and brother prove false; though the enactments of apostates, prelates, and magistrates deprive me of all I have and threaten me with death; when questioned as to my beliefs I pray that I may bear with honor the name and insignia of Christ, confessing myself to be, in the fullest sense of the term, a Seventh-day Adventist.

1. Amos 3:7

2. See *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 435

3. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 61

4. 1 Kings 18:36

5. The reference for this quotation is given as "Letter W-186, December 2, 1902. To Edson and Willie White." All emphasis supplied by the author of the book in which the quotation appears. This letter may be found in *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 17, 64-65. It should be noted that material contradicting the author's position appears immediately before the portion he quotes, and also within both sections represented by ellipses.

6. John 1:11

7. Isaiah 4:3-4

8. See Exodus 31:13, Ezekiel 20:12

9. Malachi 3:18. See also *Signs of the Times*, November 27, 1879

10. *Testimonies to Ministers*, 300

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Dave Fiedler has worked as a writer, an editor, and an instructor in Adventist academies in Canada and the United States. He currently teaches Bible (including denominational history), World History, and English at Oklahoma Academy

